DECEMBER 1988

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ACTIVISION

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Available on C64 cassette (£9.99) and disk (£14.99), Spectrum (£12.99), Amiga (£24.99)

RATTLE. ROLL IT. . .





Amiga screen shots shown



ST screen shots shown

E SENSATION OF THE YEAR'

AFTERBURNER – You've played the arcade **smash** – now **experience** the white-knuckled **realism** of a supersonic **dogfight** at home! Using your heat-seeking **missiles** and laser anti-aircraft **fire**, can you be **top gun** against a seething supersonic **swarm?**

Experience brain-numbing **G-forces;** bones **rattling** with the body-jarring **pitch** and yaw . . . **scan** with your **radar, lock on** your target and **FIRE!**

Amstrad cassette (£9.99) and disk (£14.99), Atari ST (£24.99), and MSX (£9.99).

The CRUCIAL COMPILATION

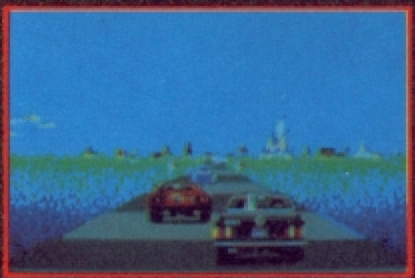




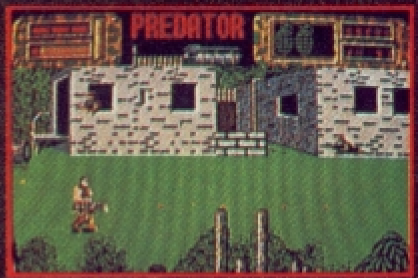
GRYZOR Featuring all the game-play of the arcade original, Gryzor takes you into a thrilling alien world of force fields, fanatical guerillas and strange enemy defence systems – but you have the fire-power and maybe, with a 'little' skill, grit and split second timing, you can infiltrate the aliens' headquarters. Play Gryzor once and you'll be hooked!
© 1987 Konami



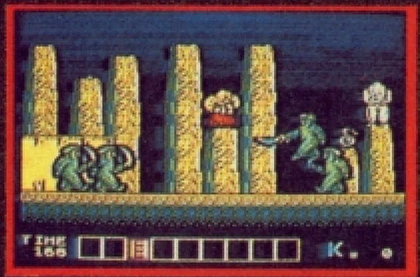
BARBARIAN THE STORY SO FAR... The evil sorcerer Drax has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess Mariana will be released. From the wastelands comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...
© Palace Software Ltd



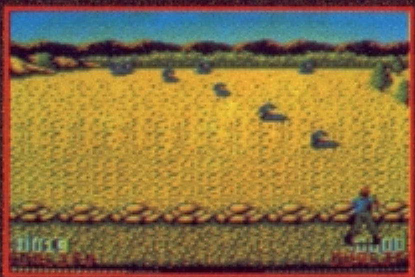
CRAZY CARS You are racing in the world's craziest race: "The American Cross Country Prestige Cars Race". If you are able to complete the race before the time runs out, you will get a faster car. You start with a Mercedes 560 SEC, and only the world's best drivers may drive a Ferrari GTO.
PREPARE TO START, READY? GO!!!
© Titus Software Ltd.
LAST NINJA replaces C.CARS on C64



PREDATOR You've heard about Predator, the Schwarzenegger movie – now you can play the leading role. Take a crack commando unit into the South American jungle to rescue a bunch of trapped diplomats. Should be easy enough...and so it would be, if it weren't for the mysterious alien who keeps on taking out your men.
© 1987 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp. All rights reserved.



KARNOV Join Karnov, the fire-breathing Russian stongman, on his hazardous quest to defeat the evil dragon Ryu and find the Lost Treasure of Babylon. Karnov is a vast 4-way scrolling game that combines both strategy and fast action in nine challenging levels of gameplay. It is recognised by arcade addicts everywhere as one of the best games of its kind. Karnov also has something special in the way of characters – have you ever been killed by a skeleton on an Ostrich?
© Electric Dreams Software Ltd



COMBAT SCHOOL Konami's arcade hit now for your home micro and already a No. 1 hit. Seven gruelling events featuring the Assault Course, Firing Range, Arm Wrestling and Combat with the instructor himself! Combat school throws down the challenge to the toughest of thoroughbred gamesters.
© 1987 Konami



TARGET RENEGADE Every move you make, every step you take, they're watching you. Fight your way through the precinct – the back alleys, the car parks, fight your way through the villainous community, the skin-heads, the Beastie Boys, the bouncers. This is just the tip of the iceberg on you chilling quest to confront "MR. BIG".



PLATOON Lead your Platoon deep into enemy territory, you can almost feel the humidity, sense the threatening dangers as you encounter the enemy and his many booby traps. Having found the underground maze of tunnels, enter at your peril! Enemy soldiers lunge at you from the murky waters within, but this is the only way you can find vital information. If you come out of this alive, you'll be just one of the few!
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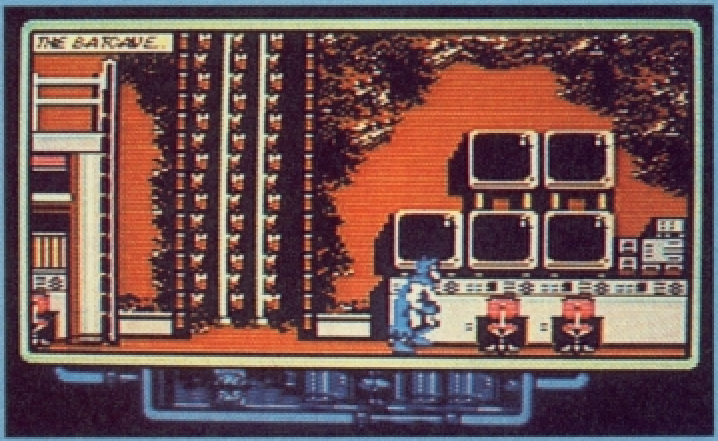
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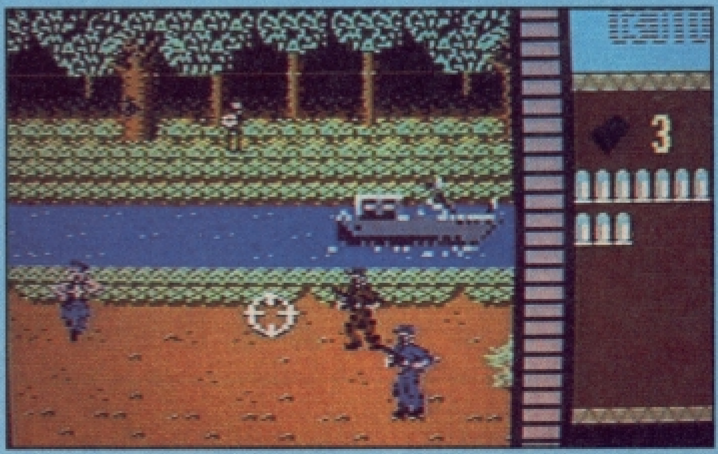
SPECIALS



REGULARS

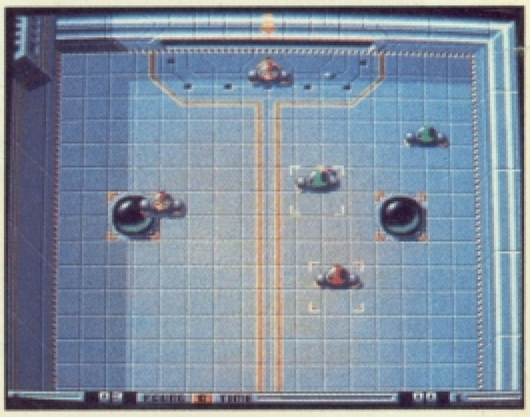








REVIEWS





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Jan-June 1988

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BUZZ

ACTIVISION CATCH DRIFT



Keeping up their all-out assault on US Gold's reputation as the premier signer-up of major coin-op licences, Mediagenic/ Activision have just announced their acquisition of the rights to Sega's *Power Drift*. This slightly eccentric dedicated racing game features a range of onscreen characters to choose from and a winding, undulating race track, and has proven popular in the arcades since its release two months ago, though hardly as innovative as some of the other major dedicated coin-ops that have cropped up in the arcades over the past twelve months. Still *Power Drift* will doubtless be much in the news come its home release in the latter half of 1989.



FIL FAIL

An an unexpected development French software house Fil have been forced to call a halt to their ambitious plans for launching into the UK market, which led to them acquiring conversion rights to a dozen coin-ops.

This situation has been brought about by one of Fil's major financial backers unexpectedly withdrawing support from the software house, thereby forcing Fil to file for representation under French law, a move which has the effect of halting any but the most basic functions of a financially troubled company. But what about all those heavy-duty coin-op licences, including *Continental Circus* and *Shinobi* (pictured above), which they've acquired conversion rights for? Well, it looks as though these titles will still be coming out under the Rebel label, initially set up by Fil's British representatives The Sales Curve to market the French company's products. Y'see, The Sales Curve actually hold all the rights in both the Rebel label name and the dozen or so coin-op licences (plus, all-importantly, the work-in-progress on the conversions) and they're currently chatting with various software houses who are interested in releasing some or all of the games. It may even transpire that The Sales Curve release some of the titles themselves on the Rebel label.



Check out this first glimpse of Activision's Christmas TV ads. The ads are for *R-Type, SDI* and *Afterburner* and will be shown at peak Saturday morning slots on the four major ITV channels.



JOKER IN THE PACK

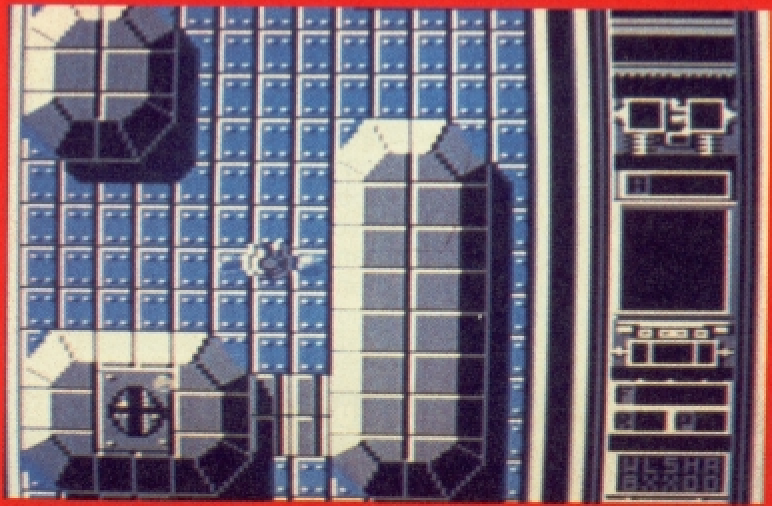
Mere weeks after Ocean Software announced their intention of releasing a game based on the adventures of the Caped Crusader comes news that the intrepid Manchester-based software house are planning a second game featuring Bruce Wayne's alter ego — before the first one has even been released. The explanation for this unusual state of affairs is that a new Batman movie is currently being filmed in Elstree Studios, featuring such luminaries as Michael 'Beetle Juice' Keaton as the man himself, top model Jerry Hall, Billy D. Williams and — a brilliant piece of casting — Jack Nicholson as arch villain The Joker. Filmed in the largest set ever constructed, 'Batman' will be hitting the big screen on July 4th 1989. So, canny types that they are, Ocean figured that it might be wise to sign up the rights to this movie doubleplusquick, so that now they'll have a Batman game on release for Christmas 1989 as well as Christmas 1988. Well, you can't have too much of a good thing, can you?

ELIMINATOR

Not content with giving 16-bit owners one of the year's most tooth-grindingly addictive games, in the shape of *Nebulus*, that clever lad John Phillips has done it again. *Eliminator* sends you powering along a disembodied space highway, bouncing, flipping and swerving through the galaxy. Out from Hewson any day now, if *Eliminator* turn out to be half as good as initial sightings suggest, it's going to run and run.



XENON



Yea, verily there was weeping and gnashing of teeth amongst all the people who had not the machine that was called Amiga, or "really pretty wonderful games machine", for they could not smite the aliens in the game called *Xenon* as could their richer brothers and sisters, and had to make do with watching 'Get Mucky' every Saturday morning. But, lo, it came to pass in that a 64 version of this wondrous game was delivered unto them, for the good brothers of Bitmap and the lords of Image Works, looking down on these poor folk, saw that their need was great, and that their desire to purchase was keen, and, really this was quite a good idea, all things considered.



GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

An oldie but goldie, and a very welcome addition to the 16-bit world, Elite's *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* initially appeared on the 64 about a trillion years ago (well, two at least). Now the Amiga crew have finally managed to produce a Mean Machine version of this enduring jump'n'splatter classic, and very nice it looks too. Definitely worth saving some Christmas money for — it's due out towards the end of January.

PERSIAN GULF INFERNO

With a plot reminiscent of a Jack Higgins novel, Magic Bytes' *Persian Gulf Inferno* puts you in the waders of the only surviving member of an anti-terrorist squad dispatched to rescue a clatter of VIP hostages, diffuse the one Megaton nuke, generally roam around the 220 screen oil rig where the action centres (plenty of ladder climbing and weapon finding involved here) and, natch, blow away as many members of the Pinko Peoples Liberation Army Of Death And Anti-Americanism as you can find. All good, realistic stuff, coming your way just in time for the Bush era.



BUZZ



OCEAN'S GAUNTLET

Armchair thrill-seekers will be delighted to hear that, through the good offices of Ocean Software, Thames Television's 'Run the Gauntlet' will be arriving on your monitors in time for next Easter. The Martin Shaw-hosted show features various highly-trained stuntpersons competing against one another in a range of extremely non-wimpoid sporting events, most of which involve powerboats, skis or hang-gliders. Well, it beats hunting in the garden for chocolate eggs. . .



KATAKIS TO BE RE-INCARNATED

Word reaches us that despite having their original version of *Katakis* outlawed by Mediagenic/Activision as infringing the copyrights in *R-Type*, German softhouse Rainbow Arts are hoping to be able to use some elements of the game in a new product currently being developed, and likely to be called *Denaris*. RA's intention is apparently to change the offending elements in *Katakis* so that there'll be no risk of the "new" product offending Activision's sensibilities. But US Gold — Rainbow Arts' UK distributors — will be taking no chances. According to Gold's Dave Baxter, "we've not agreed to take anything from Rainbow Arts — if any of the resemblances to *R-Type* are left in, it won't be released". But it seems that the German company have already forseen these potential difficulties. "I think they're going to show *Denaris* to Rod Cousens and get a letter from him saying there's no copyright infringement with respect to *R-Type*".

RAINBOW ARTS TO ENTER ARCADES

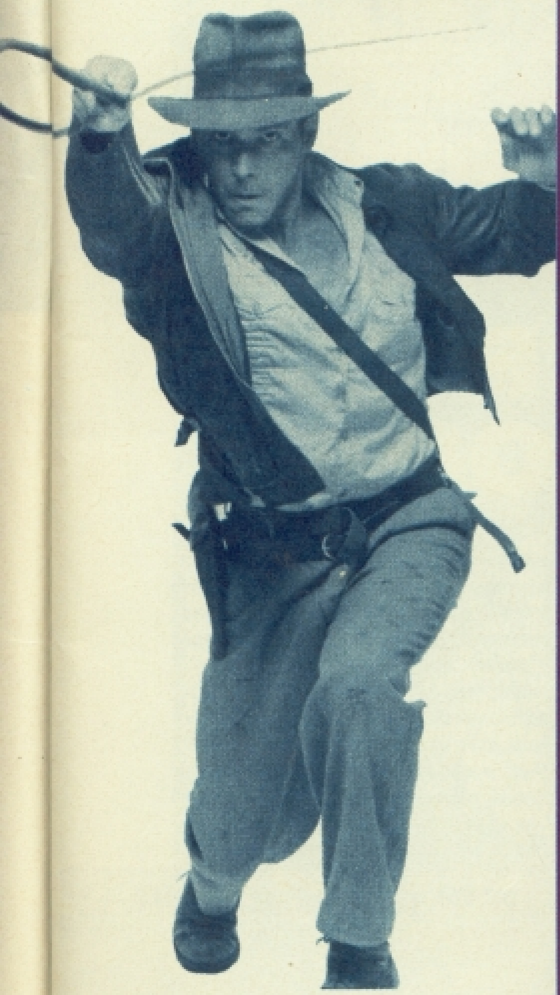
German software house Rainbow Arts have announced their intention to manufacture arcade games. Their first three coin-op releases are likely to be in British arcades by mid-1989. There are also plans to bring out home conversions of the three titles by Christmas of next year through their UK representatives US Gold. Rainbow Arts will be the third major software house to throw their hat into the coin-op ring; Mastertronic set up their Arcadia system last year using Amiga technology to power non-dedicated games, and simulation specialists Microprose have recently announced that they'll shortly be turning out their own range of dedicated arcade machines for the coin-op arena. Among Rainbow Arts' first three games are reputed to be a *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*-style game, *Dark Chamber*, and a wacky sports sim called *Monster Olympics*.

BOTHAM FOR SPORT

Elite's conversion of TV sports quiz 'A Question Of Sport' has been delayed slightly — because cheeky woolyback Emlyn Hughes defected to Nick 'Interesting' Owen's rival 'Sporting Triangles' show. Happily Emlyn's replacement is an even more charismatic sporting figure — Ian 'Hannibal' Botham, cricketer, mountain walker and all-round good guy. Elite are now working overtime to erase all traces of wee Emlyn from their game and replace him with Botham, and are confident that they'll get the work done in time to make the pre-Christmas sales boom.

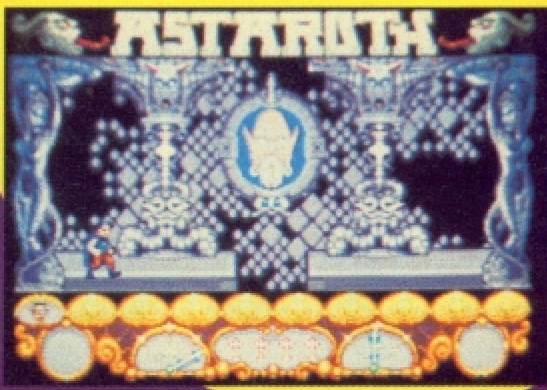


US GOLD TIE UP LUCAS FILM



US Gold have just signed a major licensing agreement with US film house Lucasfilm. The agreement will cover the long-awaited third instalment of the Indiana Jones saga, 'The Last Crusade' plus any future instalments in the 'Star Wars' saga (not of course including the forthcoming *Return Of The Jedi* which will be released on Domark). Details of the plot of 'The Last Crusade', which is still in production, are thin on the ground, but it has been revealed exclusively to Buzz that Sean Conndry will be co-starring as Indie's father! With the film due for release over here in late summer, the US Gold conversion of 'The Last Crusade' is tentatively scheduled for simultaneous release. This will be the third Indie/US Gold licence, following *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* and *Indiana Jones & The Temple Of Doom.*

ASTAROTH



One of the great pleasures Buzz has is reading through the wondrous prose of those least recognised of literary heroes, the press release writers. And, boy, we got a hot one this month: "[s]omewhere under a lost and lonely hill of grim and foreboding aspect lies a labyrinthine crypt filled with treasures both precious and magical". Give this man a Pulitzer Prize, we say. The game? Oh, Hewson's *Astaroth* — gather treasure, kill monstors, defeat the Angel Of Death, Amiga arcade-adventure, out soon. But we think that anonymous press release writer puts it so much better, don't you?

COSMIC PIRATE



All's been quiet on the Outlaw front for a while, but at last white smoke has appeared above their games development module and January will see the release of *Cosmic Pirate,* in which you play a member of the criminal organisation The Council scouring the galaxy for space cargo trucks to plunder. With the possibility of trading your ill-gotten gains in for extra weapons, speed and defences, *Cosmic Pirate* looks like it may prove quite a jolly little addition to the discriminating Amiga owner shoot 'em up library.

CRAZY CARS II

There've been a few hiccups in the Titus plans for world domination since *Crazy Cars* first burst upon the scene last year, but they're clearly hoping that this long-awaited follow-up will redress the effects of the not-so-completely - critically - acclaimed *Fire And Forget* and *Offshore Warrior*. Still plenty of driving along twisting roads against the clock but there are police road blocks and pursuit vehicles in the picture too now, and you're going to have to plan your route carefully as well as actually driving along it. Complete with 360° spins, *Crazy Cars II* should be with you in the next ten minutes or so.



WEC LE MANS



An extremely popular Konami coin-op, *Wec Le Mans* was, on its release some two years ago, immediately hailed as a classic driving game, and even now, after all the *Out Runs, Final Laps* and *Continental Circuses,* it's still a popular piece in most arcades. Now Ocean are bringing out a 64 version and, dare we say, it looks a wee bit nicer than *Out Run* ever did. But don't take our word for it — it'll be in your local softstore in December.

BUZZ



YOU CAN'T BEAT DIS 64!

Why, oh why, we hear you ask, have we stuck a photo of Yoko Ono in Buzz? No, you clots, we reply, that's not Yoko Ono. For a start, Yoko Ono's about twice as old as blushing 20-year-old Tim Simenon (better known as Bomb the Bass). And she certainly doesn't make records one millionth as happening as young Tim. And the reason why we've decided to stick Tim in here is that in a just-published interview in International Musician magazine this king of the house/hip-hop scene revealed that the computer he uses to create and arrange his wondrous hits like "Beat Dis" and "Don't Make Me Wait" is none other than the trusty Commodore 64 which, used in conjunction with Steinberg Pro-16 software, he describes as "a lot more straightforward to use than our other system, Pro-24 on the Atari". Well! One in the eye for those who write of the 64's capabilities in the light of 16-bit developments, eh? And, with Bomb the Bass's brand new single, a yummy version of the old soul classic "Say A Little Prayer", and the debut album, "Enter The Dragon", heading for the higher reaches of the charts as we type, we just decided that five CU reader's should be able to get a slice of Tim's genius for free — as long as they can tell us who wrote the original version of "Say A Little Prayer" many yonks ago. The first five correct entries out of the postbag will get a copy of the LP, featuring "Beat Dis", "Don't Make Me Wait", "Say A Little Prayer" and a heap of other stonkin' good dance tracks. Entries on a smiley face to: Bomb The Bass Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



OUT RUN EUROPA

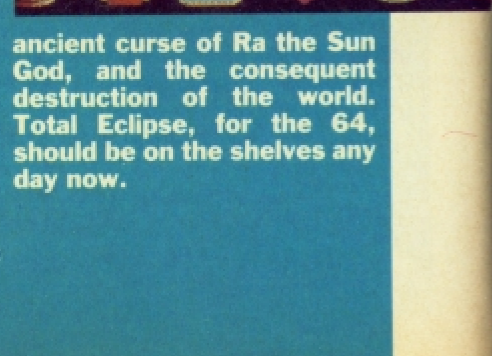
Yes it's *Out Run* — but what's all this? Different national cars? different scenery? Ah, elementary, my dear Reader, what you're goggling at is an advance Amiga screenshot of *Out Run Europa,* in which those enterprising people at Probe Software have taken the basic concept and added in five different European country scenarios, complete with appropriate motors to drive. A 2CV in La Belle France, a Volkswagen in Germany, and a couple more besides will be included when this neat update is released by US Gold on 64 and Amiga sometime in the new year.

THE DEEP

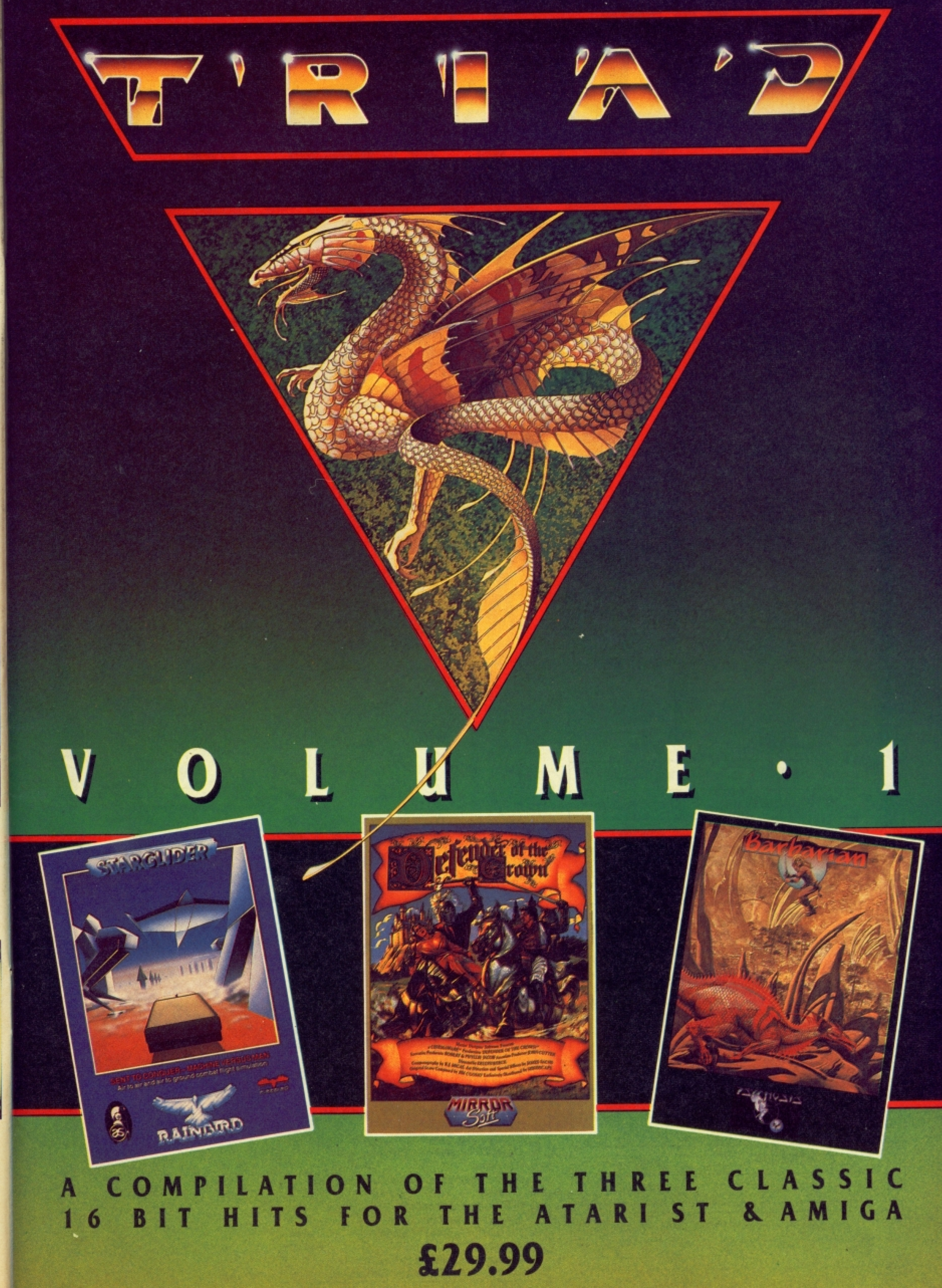


Based on ye olde coin-oppe game, US Gold's *The Deep* puts you on the bridge of a battleship travelling over submarine infested waters, dropping depth charges (4 types possible) and avoiding torpedoes. You can even turn yourself into a subaquatic machine for a limited period of time. All in all, it sounds like plenty of marine merriment for all the family (well, yourself anyway.) *The Deep* should be on the shelves before Christmas Day.

TOTAL ECLIPSE



The third in their much-loved (by themselves at least) Freescape series, Incentive Software have hit upon a more unusual plot with *Total Eclipse*, which sends you scurrying around an unexplored pyramid in 1930's Egypt, armed only with a revolver, avoiding all the perils which, as Indiana Jones fans know, such locations traditionally contain. Poison darts, ancient mummies, secret wall panels, tripwires and flying swords number among this particular pyramid's amenities, so you'll have your work cut out to prevent the triggering of the ancient curse of Ra the Sun God, and the consequent destruction of the world. Total Eclipse, for the 64, should be on the shelves any day now.


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Chart

REVIEWERS CHOICE

Mike Pattenden: *Operation Wolf* (64), *Speedball* (Amiga), *Robocop* (coin-op). Steve Jarratt: *Neuromancer* (64), *Elite* (Amiga), *Manhattan Dealers* (Amiga). Nick Kelly: *Operation Wolf* (64), *Caveman Ugh-Lympics* (64), *Thunder Cross* (coin-op). Mark Patterson: *Red Storm Rising* (64), *Joan of Arc* (Amiga), *Ultima V* (64).

AMIGA CHART

TM	LM		
1	1	STAR GLIDER 2	RAINBIRD
2	NE	ROCKET RANGER	MIRRORSOFT
3	2	INTERCEPTOR	ELECTRONIC ARTS
4	NE	BATTLE CHESS	ELECTRONIC ARTS
5	4	CARRIER COMMAND	RAINBIRD
6	NE	DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE	OCEAN
7	5	MENACE	PSYCLAPSE
8	2	VIRUS	FIREBIRD
9	NE	STRIP POKER 2	ANCO
10	NE	OFF SHORE WARRIOR	TITUS

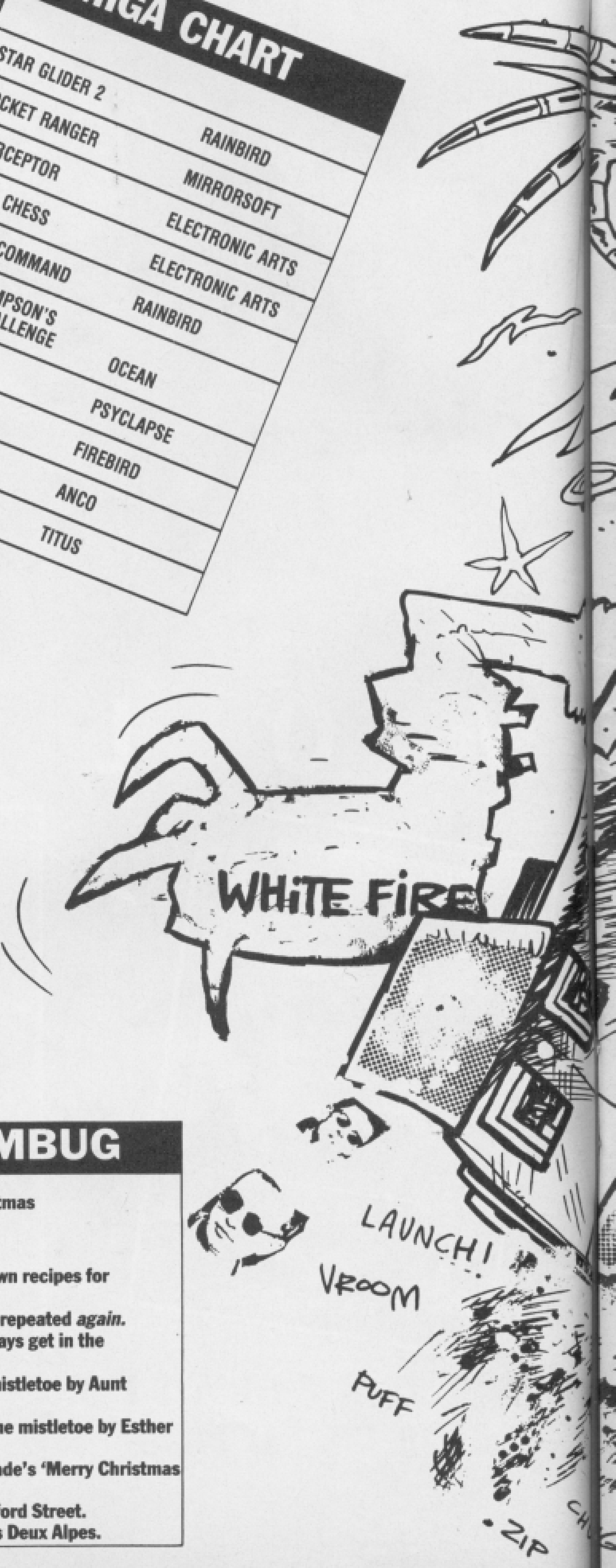
C64 CHART

TM	LM		
1	NE	LAST NINJA 2	SYSTEM 3
2	2	BARBARIAN	PALACE
3	NE	JOE BLADE 2	PLAYERS
4	2	DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE	OCEAN
5	4	BOMB JACK	ENCORE
6	NE	EMO ZONE	ALTERNATIVE
7	NE	PRO SKI SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
8	5	FOOTBALL MANAGER	ADDICTIVE
9	3	TRACK SUIT MANAGER	GOLIATH
10	NE	PRO SKATEBOARD SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
11	7	GAUNTLET	KIXX
12	NE	INTERNATIONAL RUGBY SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
13	NE	SUPREME CHALLENGE	BEAU JOLLY
14	NE	GOLD SILVER AND BRONZE	US GOLD
15	5	HAWKEYE	THALAMUS
16	NE	ACE OF ACES	KIXX
17	NE	RED STORM RISING	MICROPROSE
18	NE	1943	US GOLD
19	8	BATTLESHIPS	ENCORE
20	11	SKOOLDAZE	ALTERNATIVE

BAH HUMBUG

10 things we hate about Christmas

1. Jimmy Tarbuck.
2. The Queen's speech.
3. Two weeks of Woman's Own recipes for turkey'n'ham leftovers.
4. 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' repeated *again*.
5. The naffo puzzles you always get in the crackers.
6. Being caught under the mistletoe by Aunt Gertrude.
7. Not being caught under the mistletoe by Esther Snapgarter next door.
8. The 37th re-release of Slade's 'Merry Christmas Everybody'.
9. The pathetic lights on Oxford Street.
10. The Ed going skiing in Les Deux Alpes.



CS



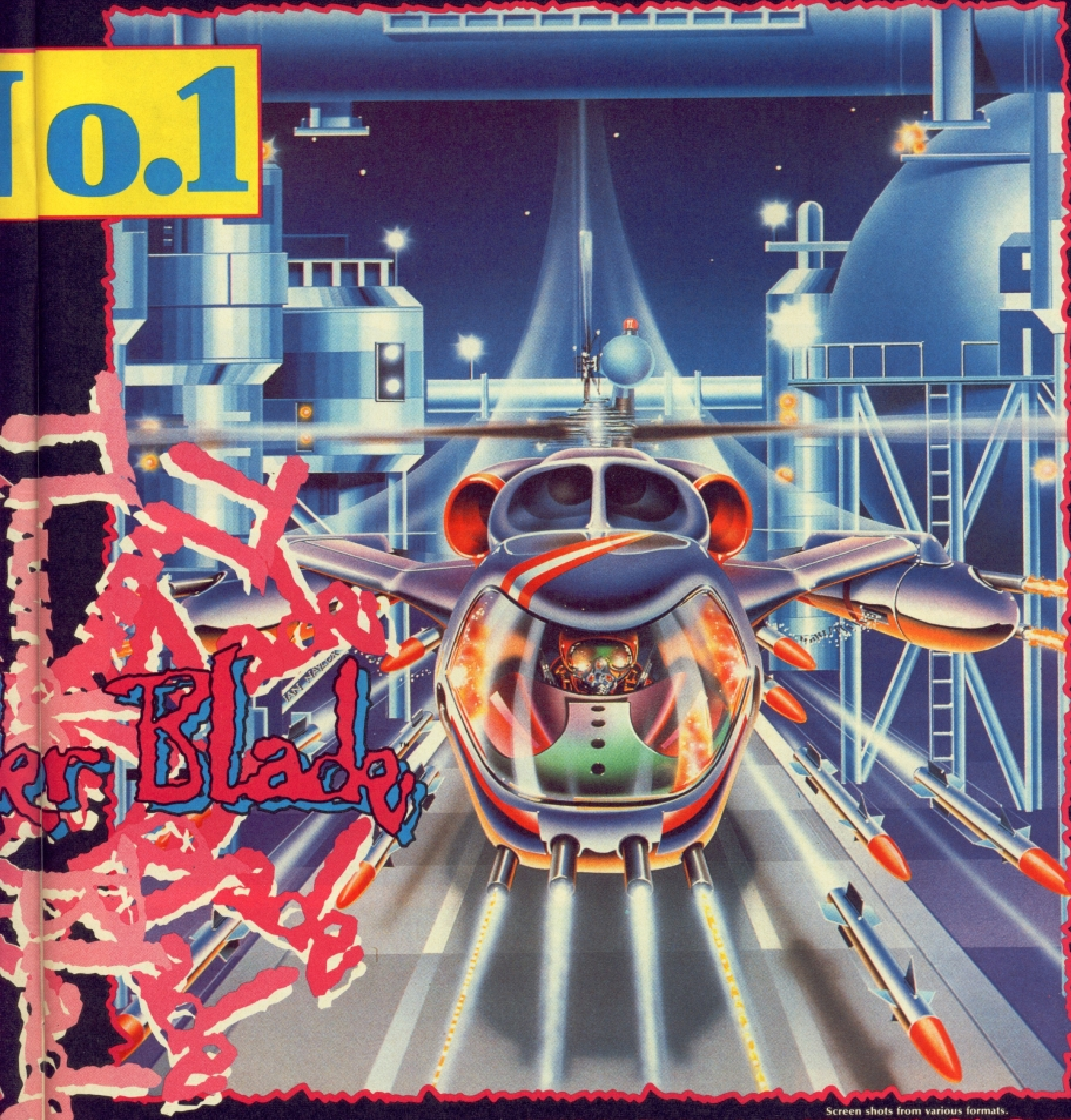
My, but you're a mischeivious lot! One month after *Operation Wolf* zoomed to the top of your personal pop pole, you've consigned it to number four in favour of last month's number three *Afterburner*. And what's a dose of Christmas cheer going to do to your judgment? Let us know — send your top fives to Readers' Coin-op Chart, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

READERS COIN-OP CHART

1	3	AFTERBURNER
2	2	DOUBLE DRAGON
3	RE	OUT RUN
4	1	OPERATION WOLF
5	RE	THUNDERBLADE

ADVENTURE CHART

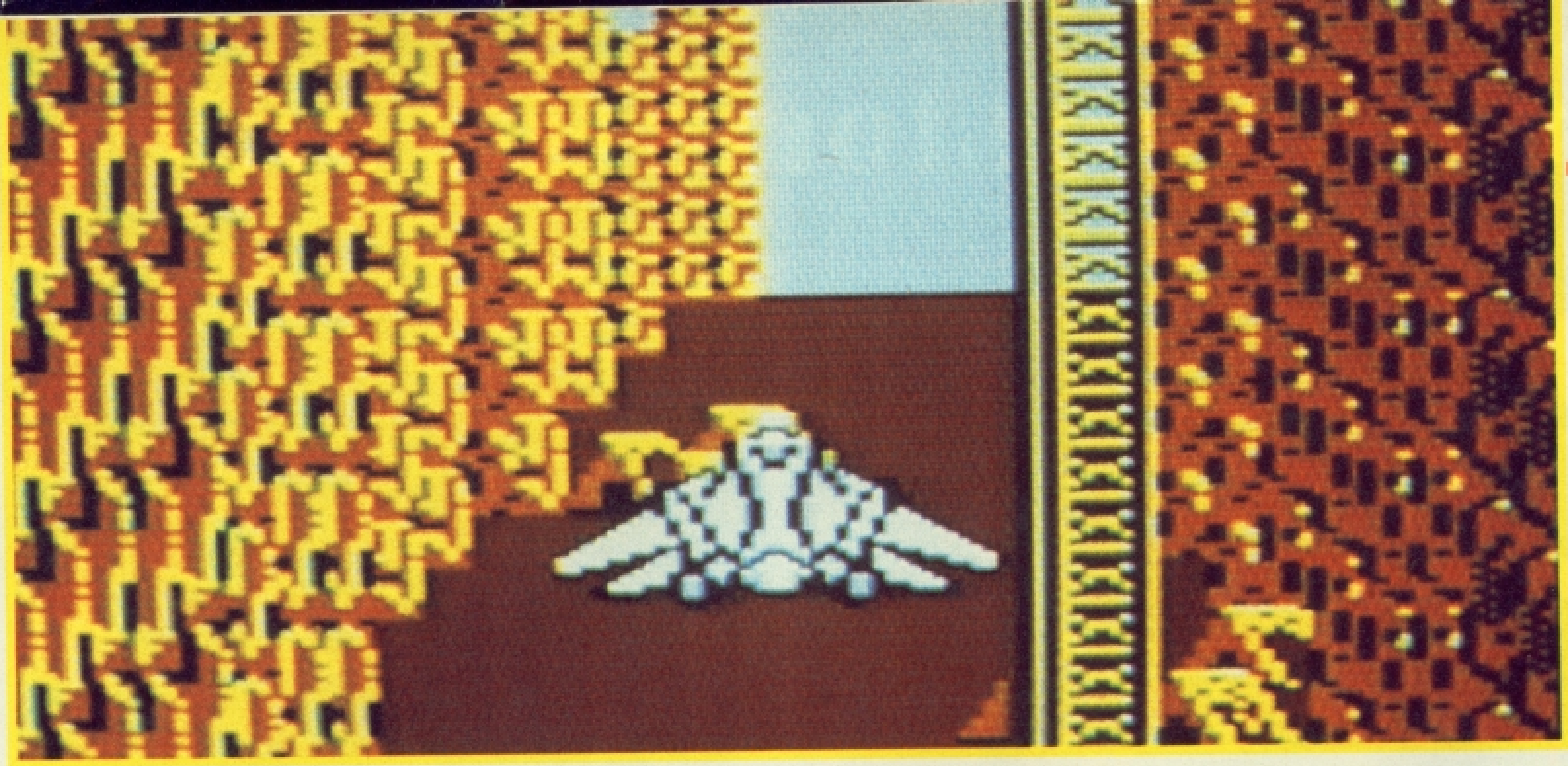
TM	LM		
1	1	BARDS TALE	ELECTRONIC ARTS
2	2	PRESIDENT IS MISSING	COSMI-US GOLD
3	3	COLOUR OF MAGIC	ALTERNATIVE
4	RE	KAYLETH	AD/SOFT-USG
5	4	BARDS TALE 3	ELECTRONIC ARTS
6	RE	ALTERNATE REALITY	DATASOFT-US GOLD
7	RE	RIGEL'S REVENGE	MASTERTRONIC
8	RE	DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	MIRRORSOFT
9	RE	LANCELOT	MANDARIN
10	RE	JACK THE RIPPER	CRL



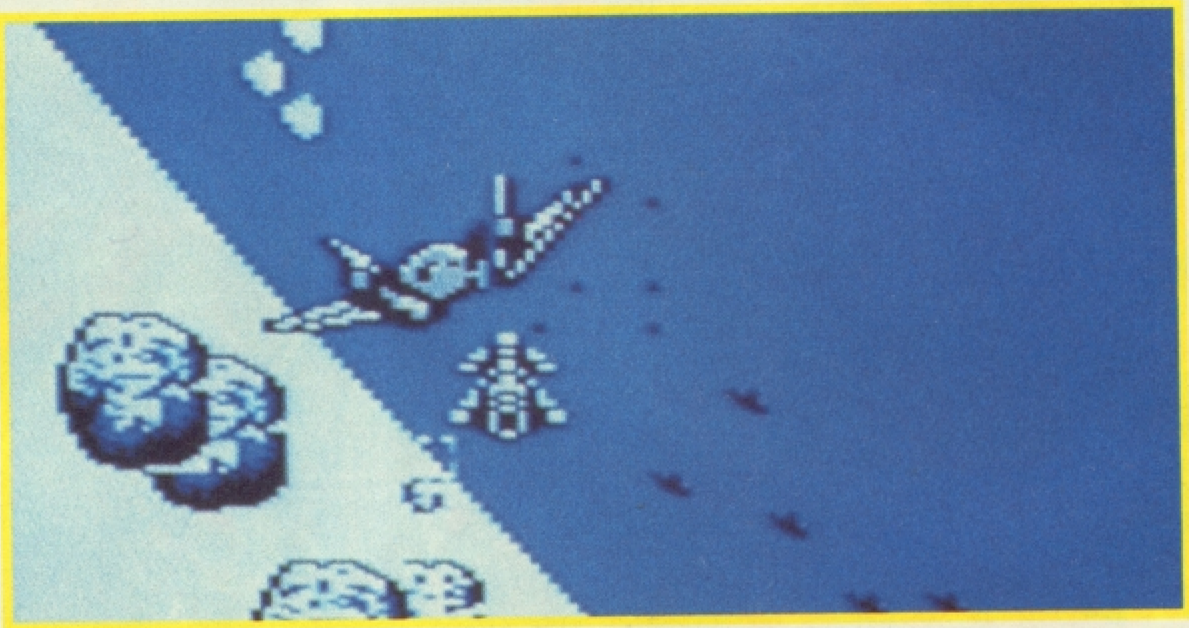
Screen shots from various formats.





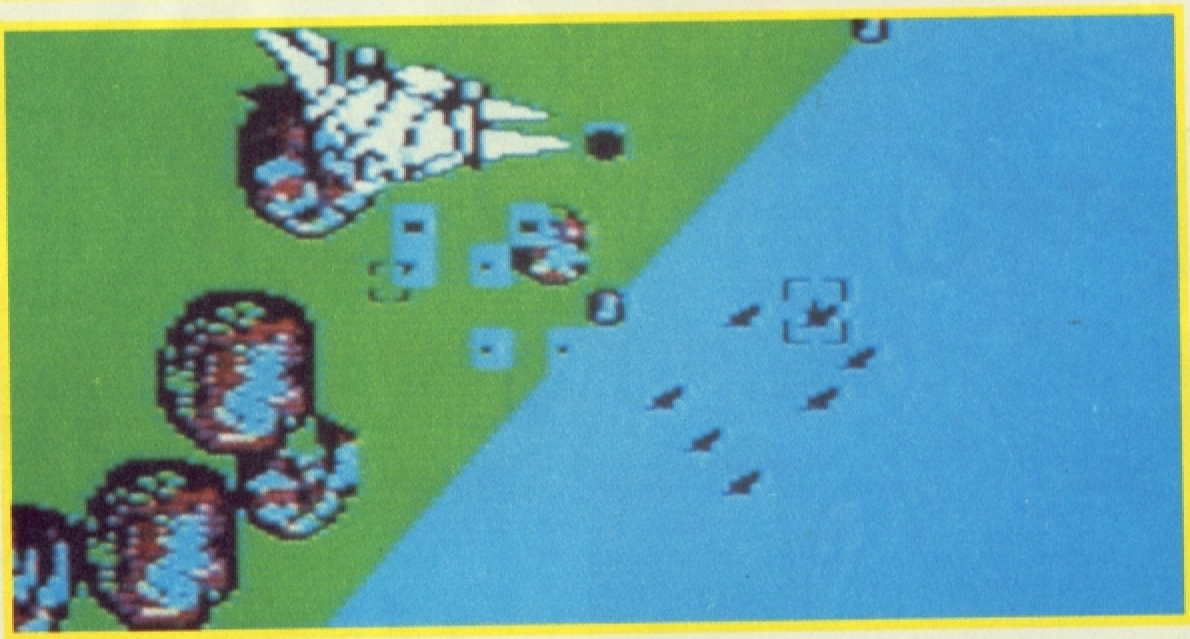


AFTERBU

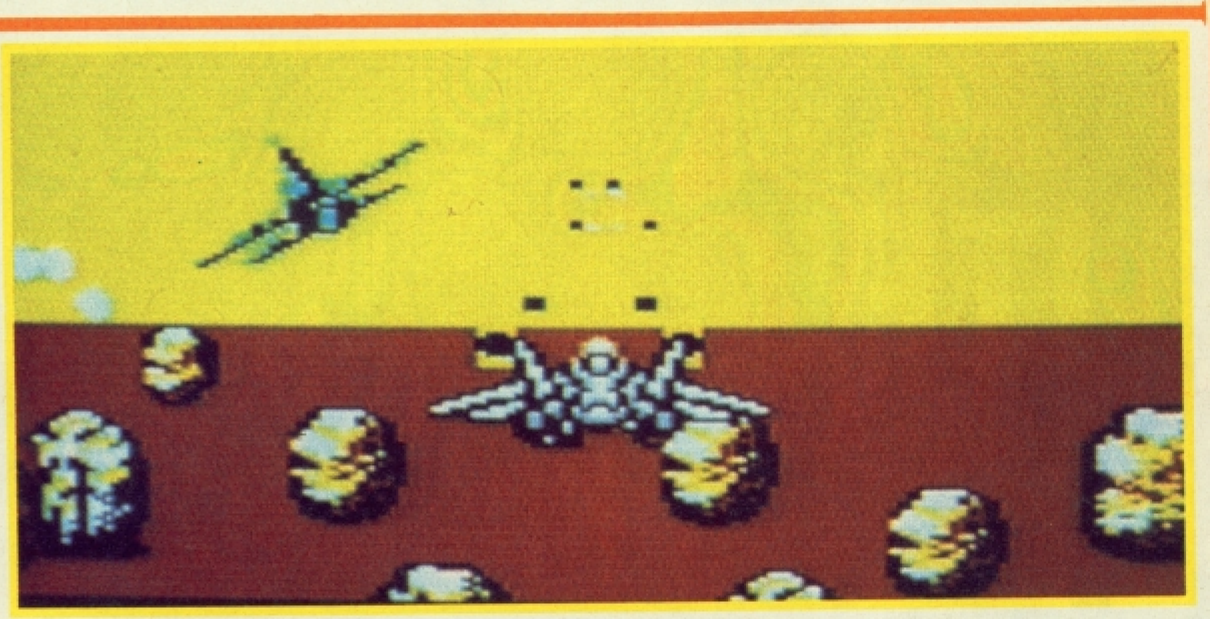


Activision, ever the contradictionists, have gone and done what everybody else said they couldn't. They've gone and converted the unconvertable. Ever since it hit the arcades, back in late '87, people of all descriptions have raved on about it's fabbo graphics, wonderful sound, and unbelievable sit down hydraulic cabinet. Activision produced the cheque book faster than Terry Venables and snatched the licence narrowly beating their closest rivals to cries of "It can't be done!" and "Remember *Out Run*".

You fly an F-14 fighter plane through 23 levels of fast frantic aerial combat, with a little bit of ground strafing thrown in for good measure. All this is done



Price:
£9.99 cass
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He's too close for lock.

URNER

from behind your aircraft, in a fixed vertical/horizontal position, with you watching the plane bob and weave around in front of you.

As you fly forward along the rapidly scrolling landscape, you are attacked from all directions by enemy fighters. Most of these come from the front, attacking you head-on kamikaze-style. Some of these (well, nearly all of them to be precise) launch missiles at you, which have to be avoided, naturally. Occassionally you'll get a fighter coming up behind you, or you'll find a missile on your tail slowly catching up on you. The only thing you can do about them is to do a quick barrel roll out of danger.

Attacking the enemy is no problem. Converting the two different ways to attack onto a single fire button isn't. Rather than try to emulate a second fire button on the keyboard, Mediagenic have put the plane's cannon on auto and used the fire button to launch missiles. This means that you automatically have an infinite supply of bullets. Sadly, as far as missiles are concerned, you don't. Launching missiles is based on the computerised 'lock-on and fire' system. The missiles you carry are radar guided, and using the crosshair that jumps around in front of your rapidly bobbing craft, you can lock the missile's targetting system on any of the planes that may be on screen. This is acknowledged by a gong sound and a 'lock-on' indicator lighting up at the bottom of the screen. The enemy you are locked onto is then surrounded by a square, just to help you. Press fire, and you launch a missile, which screams toward the chosen enemy, leaving a trail of smoke behind it. Of course, planes can also be shot down with the cannon.

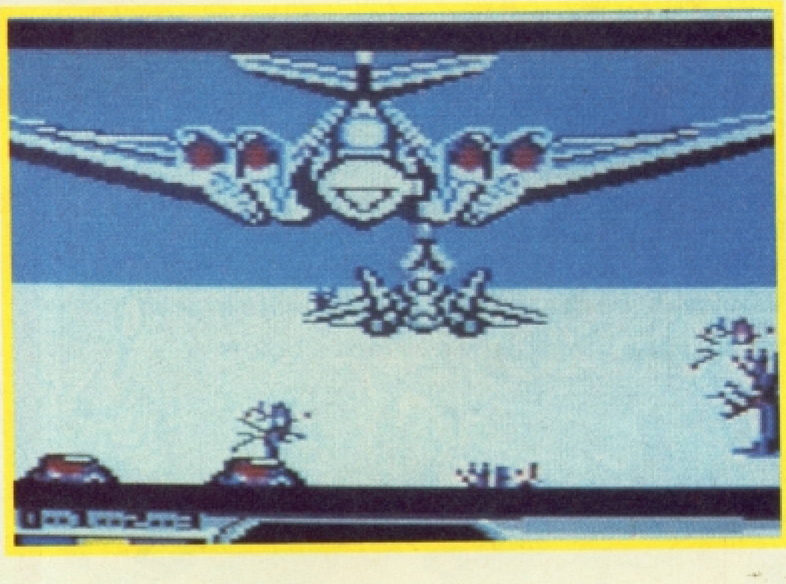
The graphics are disappointing, but what can you expect? All the bonus graphical thrills are still there, like the plane taking off from the carrier at the start (and landing on it again at the end) and the aerial refueling sequences, of which there are two types. One involves the carrier docking with a huge aircraft and the other involves the plane landing on a runway, being serviced by a crowd of people, and then taking off again. This only happens twice in the entire game, and both times the plane is accompanied along the runway by a different vehicle from another two popular Sega games (the *Out Run* Ferrari and the *Super Hang On* bike.) That said there's nothing here to take your breath away and sometimes you're left watching near naked character blocks.

The real problem with *Afterburner*, once you strip away the amazing speed and the responsive controls, is that it is just far too easy. The secret to completing *Afterburner* is to keep moving a little to the left and then a little to the right. The only real problem is the missiles that come up behind you, but a quick barrel roll soon sorts them out.

Afterburner is a reasonable attempt at converting the unconvertable but then that frequently seems to be the case these days. Technically it's not serious opposition for *Operation Wolf*, but for the public it may still prove to be number one.

Tony Dillon

Refuel in mid-air.



SOUND	**56%**
GRAPHICS	**68%**
LASTABILITY	**61%**
PLAYABILITY	**72%**

70%

WIN A SATELLITE DISH!



No we're not giving away Jodrell Bank, but we have got the next best thing. Those good souls at Mediagenic are giving away a Skyscan K1 satellite dish and receiver to the unbelievably lucky winner of this month's competition.

The K1 is compatible with any TV and only measures 1.5m across (not that you'd want to put it in the living room) but it'll pick up any of the existing satellite TV stations already broadcasting like Sky Europe, Superchannel and MTV, plus any of the new channels due to begin broadcasting next year. You'll never have to watch Noel Edmonds again!

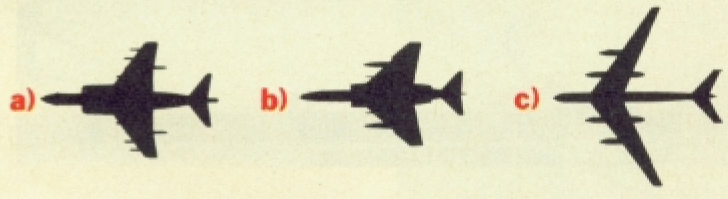
Runners-up won't miss out either. We've got 50 huge Sega/Afterburner posters to give away and a further 25 copies of the game (Amiga and 64). That's over £1,000 of goods and chattels from Mediagenic.

Here's what you have to do — answer some more teasing trivia set by the CU questionmasters.

1) What is the name of the rocket due to be launched into space next year carrying the new TV satellite stations?

2) What was the name of the first satellite in orbit?

3) Identify the three plane silouettes below



4) Apart from the F-14 Tomcat name two other 'cats' in the Grumman family.

5) What is the name of the Russian space shuttle?

Wingco Tom Glennister tells us that the F-14 Tomcat pilots' motto is 'Anytime, anywhere baby'. Pretty lyrical we're sure you'll agree, but what we want you to do for a tiebreaker is come up with the motto for the CU Crew. 'No lunch too long' for example . . .

Answers on a tomcat's tadger or the ubiquitous postcard together with your name and adress and machine to Afterburner Compo, CU, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

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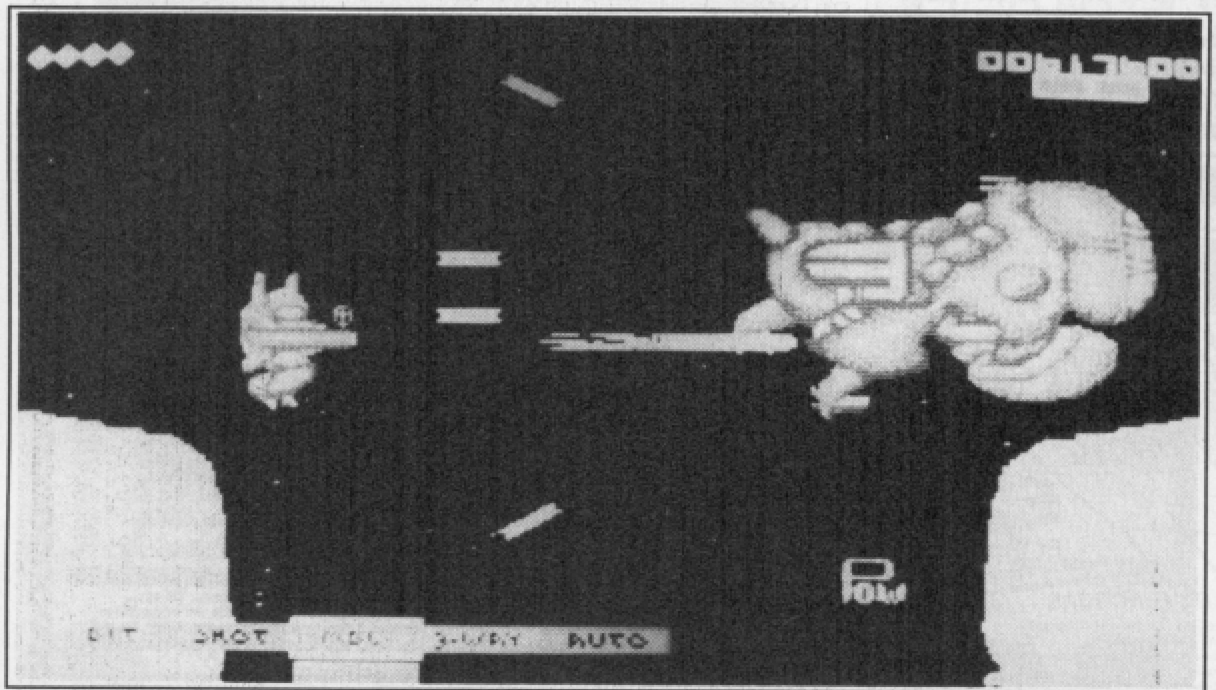
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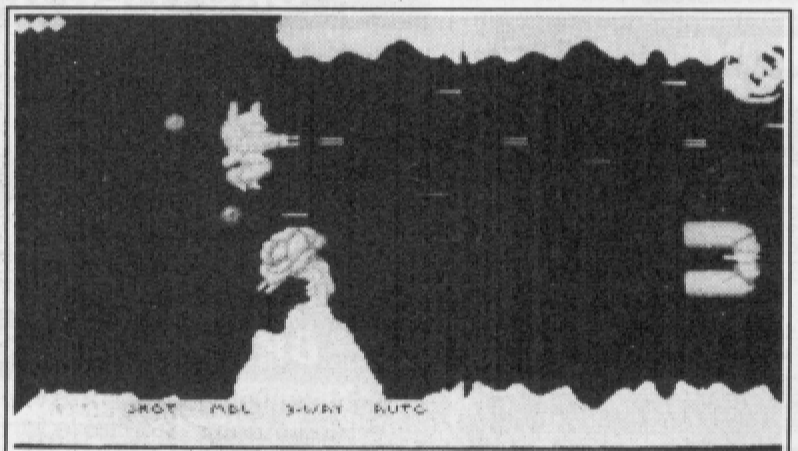
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Blasting a space slug.

SIDE ARMS

Surely we all remember when this was released on the C64, all those months ago. Then the mighty dwarf *(says the jolly green giant — Ed)*, Mark Patterson revealed to the world what a terrible piece of programming it was, giving it an overall mark of two. Now it has appeared on the Amiga and, thankfully, it is worthy of a higher mark, but not by much.



Attack of The Mutant Croissant.

It's not that it's bad conversion. It's not. In fact, Probe have done quite a splendid job in getting the look and sound of the game into a recognisable 16-bit format. The sad fact is, there's very little playability.

As before you play Lieutenant Henry foraging through caverns and computerised corridors on your way to do battle with the maniacal Bzon, who threatens to destroy the blue globe. No, it's not exactly 'War and Peace'.

The graphics are quite nicely converted from the original. Large, sharp sprites adorn the screen, and smooth scrolling and animation help the look along nicely. The problem is that the sprites are too large. Dodging the enemy becomes nigh on impossible, and at some points, there is just so much on screen that the game slows down uncontrollably and there's nothing you can do but die.

A tune plays continually, grinding away in the background though the explosions sound quite nicely on the ears. Each of the five different weapons (which are dropped by a specific sort of alien, incidentally) makes a different sound.

One major feature Probe have missed out in their conversion is the two player aspect. To all players of the original, this is where the game came into its own. With the two big guys, battling it out against hordes of screaming nasties. The best bit was that you were able to 'merge' the entities into one huge fighting destruction machine, capable of eight-way simultaneous fire and nigh-on invincible for a short time. This can be done on the Amiga version, but only by picking up a certain icon. When collected, the other guy suddenly appears entwined with you, limbs everywhere, sweat, blood, gravy and egg all over the place.

You can play by either mouse or joystick control, and for some reason I found it far easier by mouse, using the two buttons to choose the direction to face. *Side Arms* isn't a difficult game, it's just not a very playable one.

Tony Dillon

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SOUND	**74%**
GRAPHICS	**57%**
LASTABILITY	**41%**
PLAYABILITY	**53%**
OVERALL	**52%**

52%

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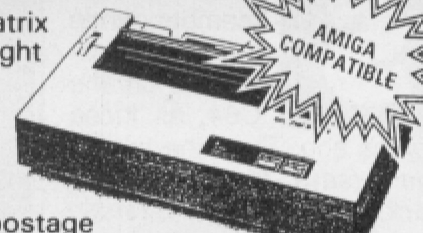
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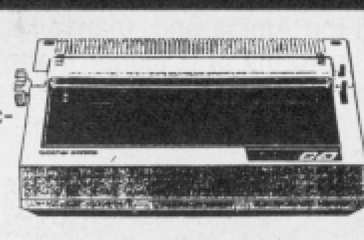


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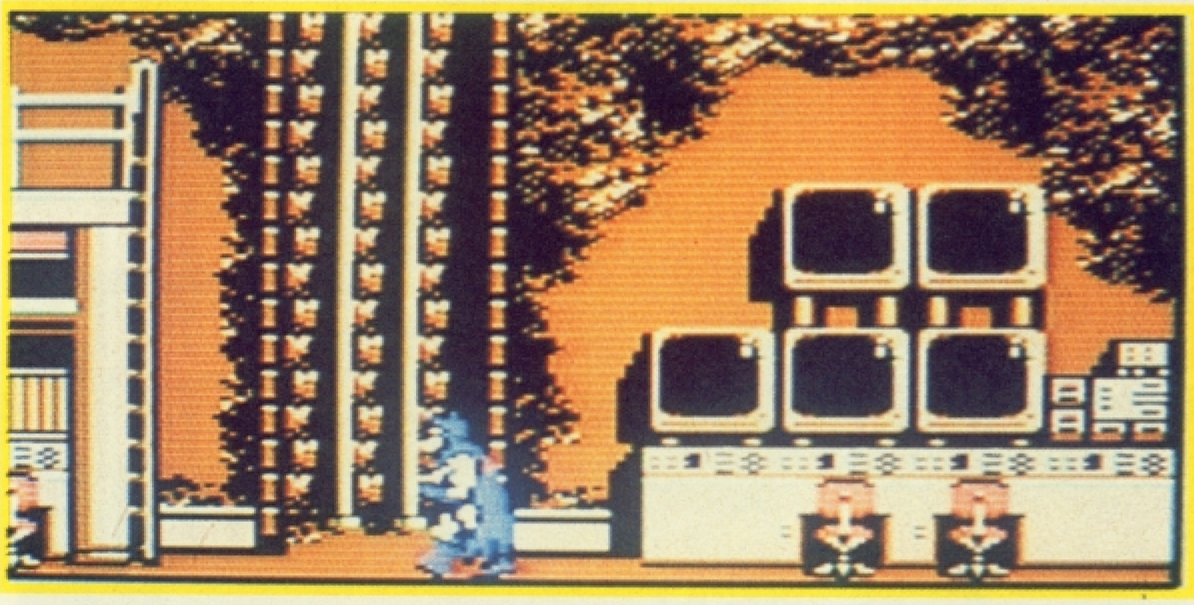
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Quick Robin, to the batmobile. Robin? Robin!!?

BATMAN

Over the past twelve months Batman has experienced something of a revival after being shown on breakfast TV and featuring as The Dark Knight in Frank Miller's excellent graphic novel. There's even a film in production, and of course now there's this little piece of software.

In the first of two parts Batman finds a message on the batcomputer that Robin has been kidnapped by the Riddler and chained to a roller coaster in the fun park — and that's not all! Hidden under the park are twelve high explosive bombs waiting for the arrival of Batman so they can set themselves off.

This is where *Batman* will appeal to all you mappers. Batman can walk left/right up/down and even backwards and forwards through the multitude of well-known screens. A sewer, a fun house and a lot of other locations do a great job at hiding the dozen bombs.

Not surprisingly every screen bar the Batcave is full of nasties from the Riddler himself right down to jet propelled teddy bears, who, after obligingly smashing themselves against your head lie stunned for a few seconds on the floor. There are shades here of Alan Moore's one-off 'The Killing Joke.' Naturally the programmers would hate to see anything bad befall Batman, so he has been given the gift of the fist and can punch his way out of some of the more awkward situations, though true to Batman's ethics he can't kill.

Like all arcade adventures plenty of objects are to be found lying in various locations, some with logical uses, like a gas mask for the sewers or the false teeth so Batman can eat food to top up his energy. Other items like the camera do pointless things like print up a picture of the villains.

The second part of the adventure has the Penguin attempting to take over the world with little robot penguins. This is the harder of the two scenarios, but is still very similar in gameplay.

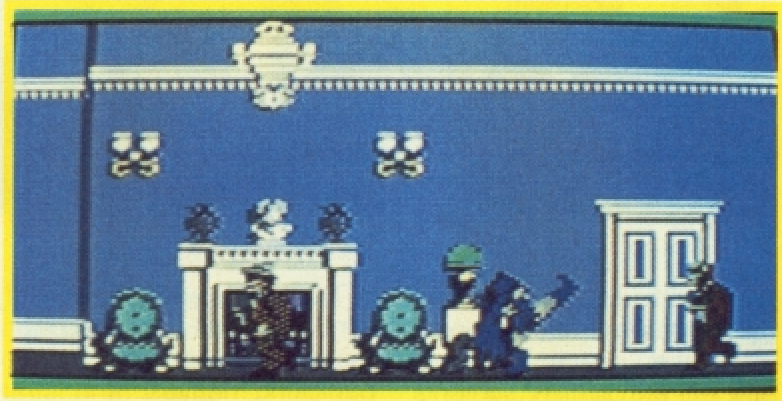
One novel feature is the use of windows. Every time you enter a new screen the previous one 'blues out', helpful for identifying where you've been for the last couple of moves.

Batman is one step above being a run-of-the-mill logic puzzle arcade adventure. Some of the graphics are really neat for their comparitive size. A cheerful ditty plays throughout the game, though it can be switched off. Otherwise sound is minimal.

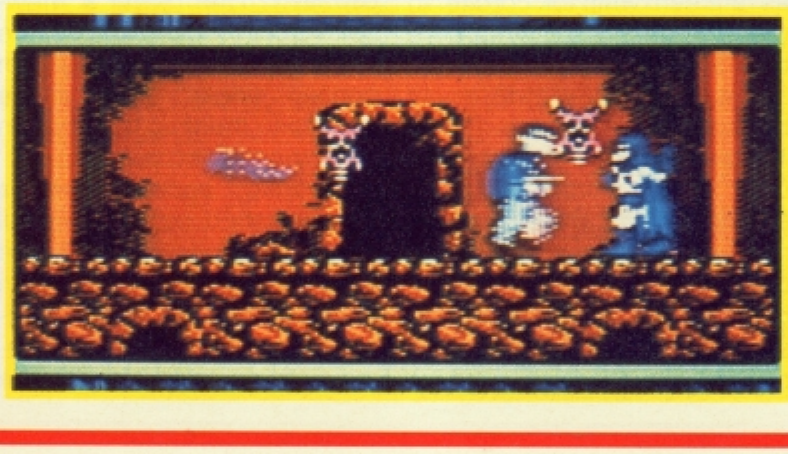
A very good game with plenty going for it. My profit sniffer tells me this should do well.

Mark Patterson

Holy nouveau riche! What dodgy digs.



Now for the bat lash.



Ocean
Price:
£ 9.99 cass
£14.99 disk

GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	76%
PLAYABILITY	82%
LASTABILITY	77%

79%



OPERATION WOLF

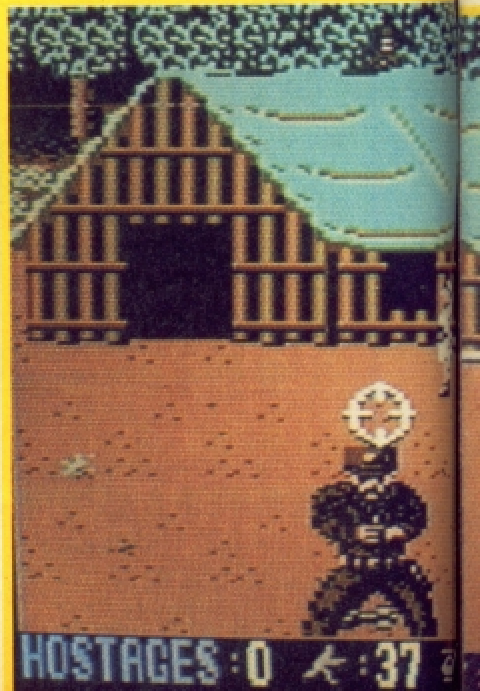
Ocean
Price
£8.95 cass
£12.95 disk

In the current wave of East/West detente, pacificism, peace and goodwill and smiley symbols, *Operation Wolf* comes as a fresh whiff of cordite to those who enjoy nothing more than a swift bit of genocide.

Arcade-goers will no doubt be more than conversant with Taito's Uzi-modified shoot 'em up. Unfortunately, Ocean couldn't manage to include a replica of the Israeli 9mm submachine gun in the package, but the game suffers surprisingly little despite this apparent deficit.

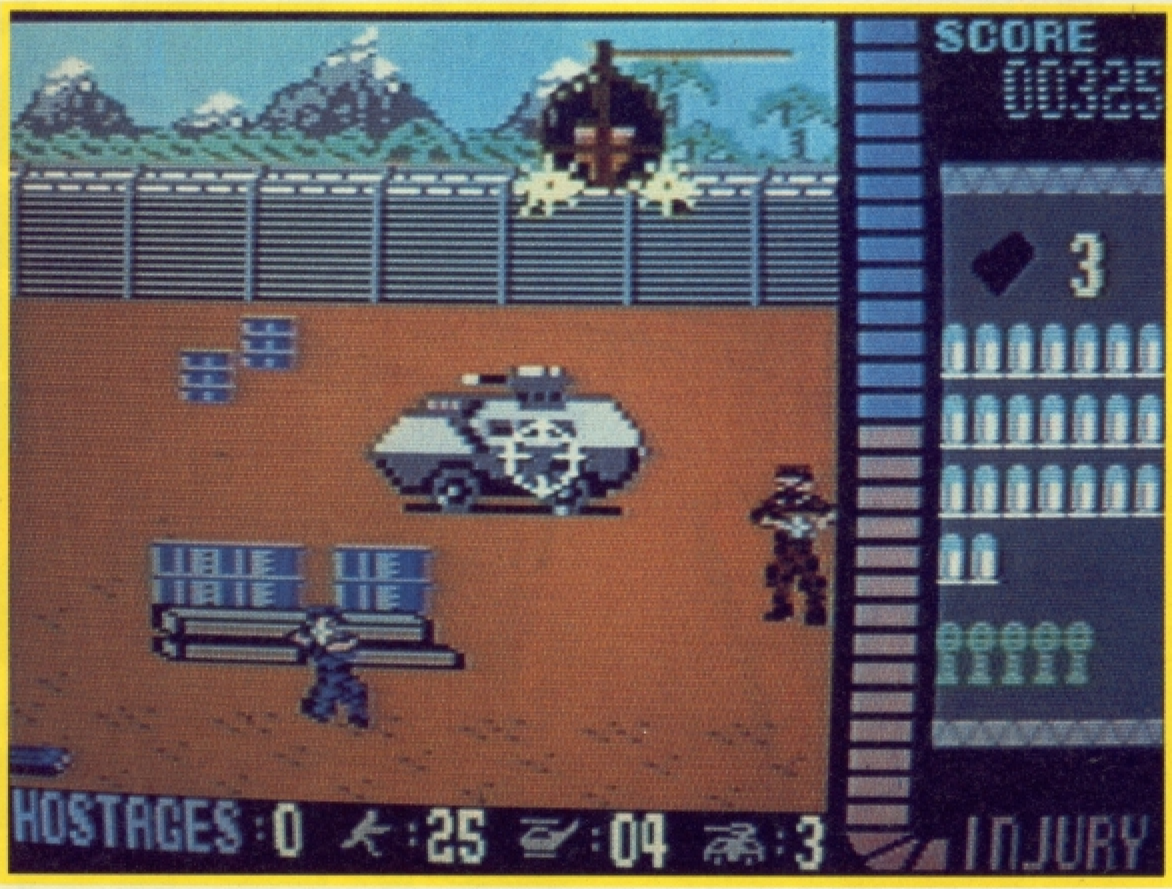
The aim is war-mongeringly simple: shoot anything that moves (with the exception of panicking natives, and stretcher-bearing nurses . . . well, usually.) The player's viewpoint slowly moves across one of six backdrops, varying from dense jungle and village scenes to the final target of an enemy-occupied airport.

Clearing each scene is accomplished by shooting all the enemy personnel in the area. A display at the bottom of the screen shows the number of men and machines remaining on each level. The player progresses in this way until the fifth scene, the concentration camp, where hos-



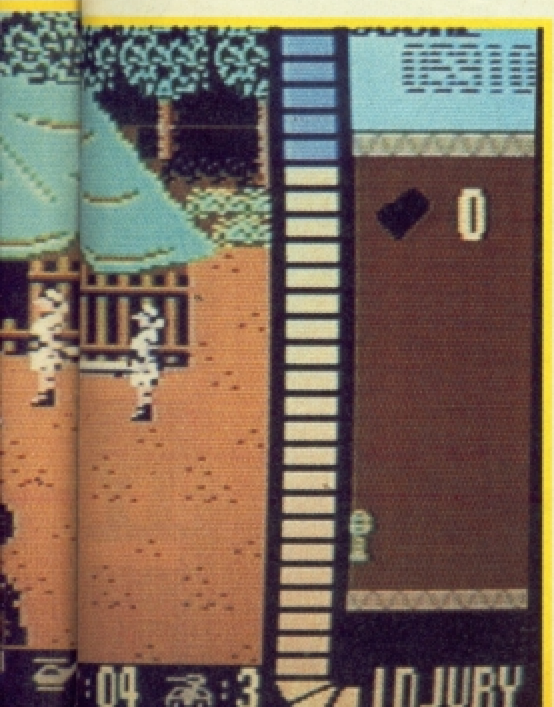


Grab that ammo clip.



Get the helicopter first.

tages are released one by one, and must be allowed to run off-screen. In the final chapter, the player gives the hostages covering fire as they attempt to board a moving airliner to freedom.



To make the slaughter go with a bang, the Uzi is fitted with a rocket launcher, and comes complete with a stock of rockets. Ammo for both machine gun and launcher are replenished by blasting the corresponding icons which appear at the bottom of the screen, while the 'F' symbol gives unlimited firepower for an all-too-brief 10 seconds. Similarly, the player's injury level can be lowered by shooting the 'P' power drink which also appears, and the complete screen can be cleared in one go by hitting the dynamite.

As with their previous releases, *Arkanoid I* and *II*, Ocean have included the option to use a NEOS mouse instead of a joystick. It has to be said that this is the much preferred method of play; it's responsive, accurate, and allows the mortars to be launched using the second fire button. The joystick option has been implemented about as well as it could be, but still suffers from being slightly unwieldy and prone to 'oversteer'. There is also the problem of having to reach for the space bar to fire mortars. Thankfully, Ocean have tweaked the game so that it's about as difficult either way.

Accordingly, I can unreservedly advise all those 64 owners with a compatible mouse to rush out and buy *Op Wolf* immediately. However, all you joystick wielders (the larger majority by far) should saunter out casually and purchase it at your leisure — and get a mouse, too.

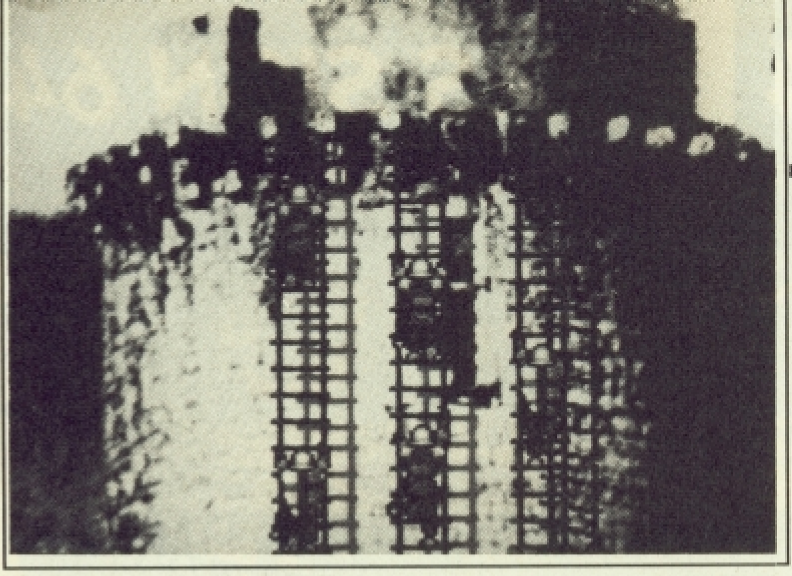
Steve Jarratt

AMIGA UPDATE

By all accounts the Amiga Op Wolf should be the best one available, boasting graphics downloaded from the coin-op, plenty of sampled speech and sound effects from the machine, plus a soundtrack which is more or less identical to the original. Obviously, it will be mouse operated, and as such, should play equally as well as the 64 plus NEOS. The 16-bit *Operation Wolf* should be available by the third week of November.

SOUND	**82%**
GRAPHICS	**91%**
LASTABILITY	**87%**
PLAYABILITY	**92%**

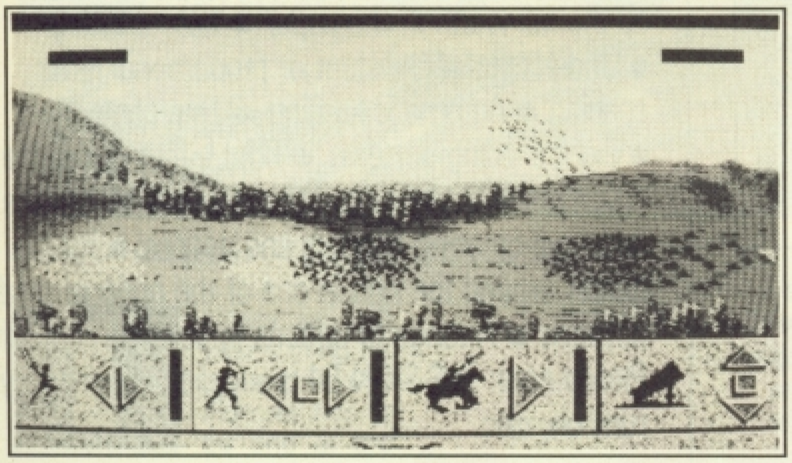
90%



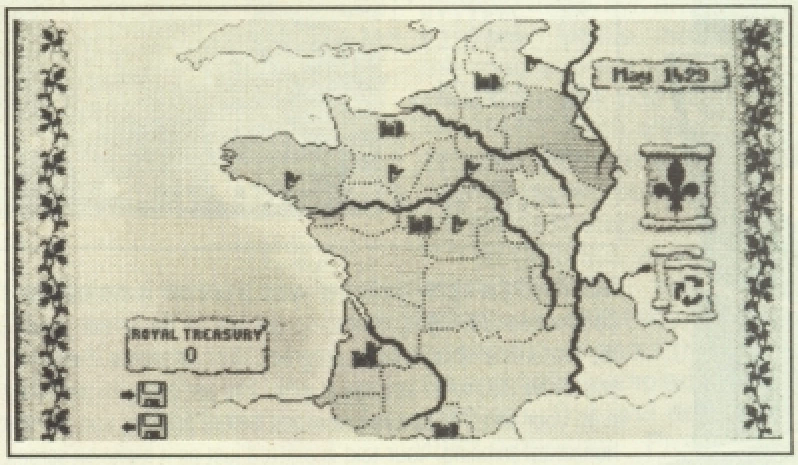
Scale those castle ramparts.

JOAN of ARC

The green fields of France.



A map of mediaeval France.



Probably one of the best known games ever to emerge on the Amiga, and probably one of the first major 16-bit software innovations was Cinemaware's *Defender of the Crown,* in which you played a Saxon Lord trying to take over Britain, county by county. *Joan of Arc* is something of a clone, but don't let that put you off: it's pretty impressive.

Despite the game's title, you play the role of the Prince, and you must take power before you can do any serious ruling and drive les Anglais out of France.

The game is played much along the same lines as *DOTC.* The main game screen contains a map of France, with all the various provinces coloured either blue (French rule), red (British rule) or a middling grey (revolting peasants). You have to try and win over all the provinces that aren't blue and unite France, and to do that, you have to call on the assistance of Joan, Maid of Orleans, shown on the map as a blue flag.

At the side of the screen are two icons. One is the royal command icon, and the other is the seal of approval. The royal command icon calls up a menu of the seven different things you can do. These range from a full attack on an enemy castle, to more subtle measures, like diplomacy or even espionage. The seal is there to stamp any pronouncements you may make to spies, allies or enemies.

The funny thing about the seven royal duties is that you can only do one of them to start with. The rest can't be done until you are crowned. That's dynastic royalties for you.

When you are travelling about the map, you will attack and be attacked by the enemy. This is all done in some really attractive arcade sequences, featuring a digitised backdrop of either a castle or a piece of French countryside. Overlaid are some well-animated cartoon quality sprites, and it's these that give the game it's distinctly European look.

One of the events represents storming an enemy castle, while another sequence involves protecting your own castle against enemy invasion by pouring hot oil and throwing rocks at invaders as they scale the castle walls.

My favourite part of the game has to be the battles. You are represented as a large mass of white pixels and the enemy in black. You have three divisions of soldiers (footsoldier, archer, mounted cavalry) and each can be moved independently. You can launch volleys of arrows at each other, or simply wade in and see who gets decimated first.

The sound is excellent with digitised crowd noises coupled with a few agonised 'uurghs' an 'arghs' which really add to the fun.

The only thing that really mars Jon Dark is the disk access. Even when you call up the weather on the map, it has to load it in.

That aside, it's still fun to play. A little hard to start with, granted, but fun nonetheless.

Tony Dillon

US Gold
Price: £24.99

GRAPHICS	**90%**
SOUND	**84%**
PLAYABILITY	**71%**
LASTABILITY	**75%**

78%





Danger — wild driver!

OUT RUN

It may be last year's thing for some, but *Out Run* still has to be one of the most eagerly awaited 16 bit releases yet. The arcade game is a classic, and really still remains in a class of its own despite the advent of 3D grand prix games like *Continental Circus*, two player link-ups (*Final Lap*) and 'chase' games.

First impressions are promising. Conversion house Probe (you'll know it's them, the Ferrari has owner Fergus McGovern's initials on the numberplate) have lavished some icing on the cake in the form of some impressive sampled sound on the introduction, taken directly from the screeching wheels of a Ferrari augmented by some very over-the-top orchestral music.

The playing screen looks like the ST, but there are changes and distinct improvements to the background graphics. The sea for example on the first level is represented much better (though there are still no windsurfers) and the speed is definitely quicker.

There are twenty possible routes and five different destinations for you and your gal to cruise through, taking you past desert, through farmland, intercity highways and winding canyons. Unlike the coin-op the road doesn't fork. Instead you chose one side of the road when you reach a line of flower pots! This takes you onto one of the two possible routes for the next stage.

The graphics vary from the impressive to the barely adequate, whilst sound is pretty good throughout (much of it having been sampled from the coin-op). The real acid test is the gameplay. Probe have certainly got to grips with the speed, it goes fast enough to hurt my eyes, but I have to say I have reservations about its smoothness and implementation.

Somehow *Out Run* still disappoints, but part of that is that expectations are so high. The Amiga version is undoubtedly the best and that will be enough for some.

Mike Pattenden

US Gold
Price: £24.99

SOUND	**87%**
GRAPHICS	**71%**
LASTABILITY	**62%**
PLAYABILITY	**60%**

67%



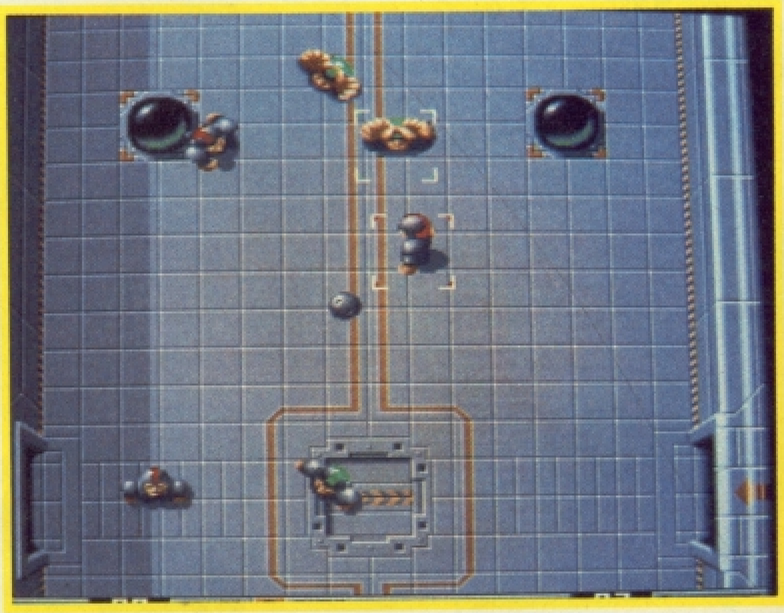
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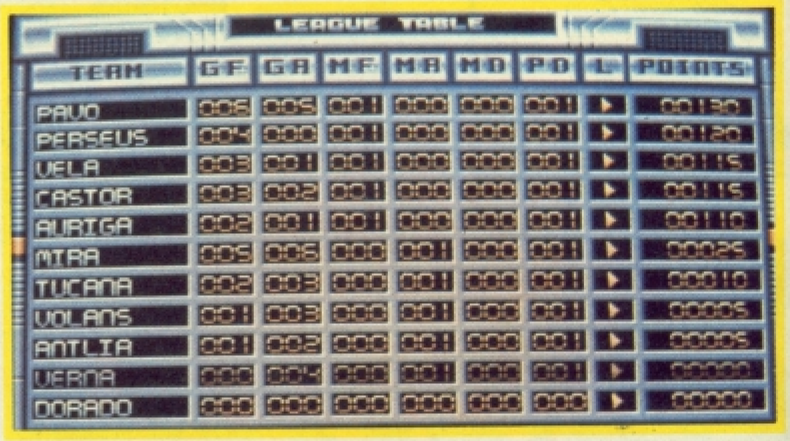
It's up for grabs.

Question: What do you get if you cross football with rugby, rollerball, and throw in a bit of Brockian Ultra Cricket for good measure? Answer: *Speedball*. Probably one of the best games yet to grace the Amiga *(Brockian Ultra Cricket?! — Ed).*

In *Speedball*, you control a gang of five 'ballers, in what is *the* game of the future (where have I heard that one before?) The basic rules are pretty straightforward. The play area is a steel-wall encased arena with a goal at either end. Two teams compete, and the aim is to get the ball into the opponent's goal more often than the opposing side. 'Sfunny game, you say, isn't that just like football?

The ball is carried, and after that there are no rules as such because once you get the ball, you've got to try and stop your opponent from robbing you, and basically he doesn't care how he gets it. The best way to go about this, and in effect one of the only two ways to do it, is to slug the nearest opposing player right across the chops. This effectively gets him out of the way for a few seconds and gives you a bit of breathing space. After that you should belt up the pitch and whizz the ball in the back of the net.

Speedball is amazingly violent. You can beat up other players to make it just that little easier to get to the goal. The off-the-ball tackling makes Paul Davies look like Ronald McDonald. More importantly, you can beat up the goalie, which makes it easier to score than aiming a half chance at Bobby Mimms. Naturally, of course, the opponent will do the same thing to you, which just adds to the fun.



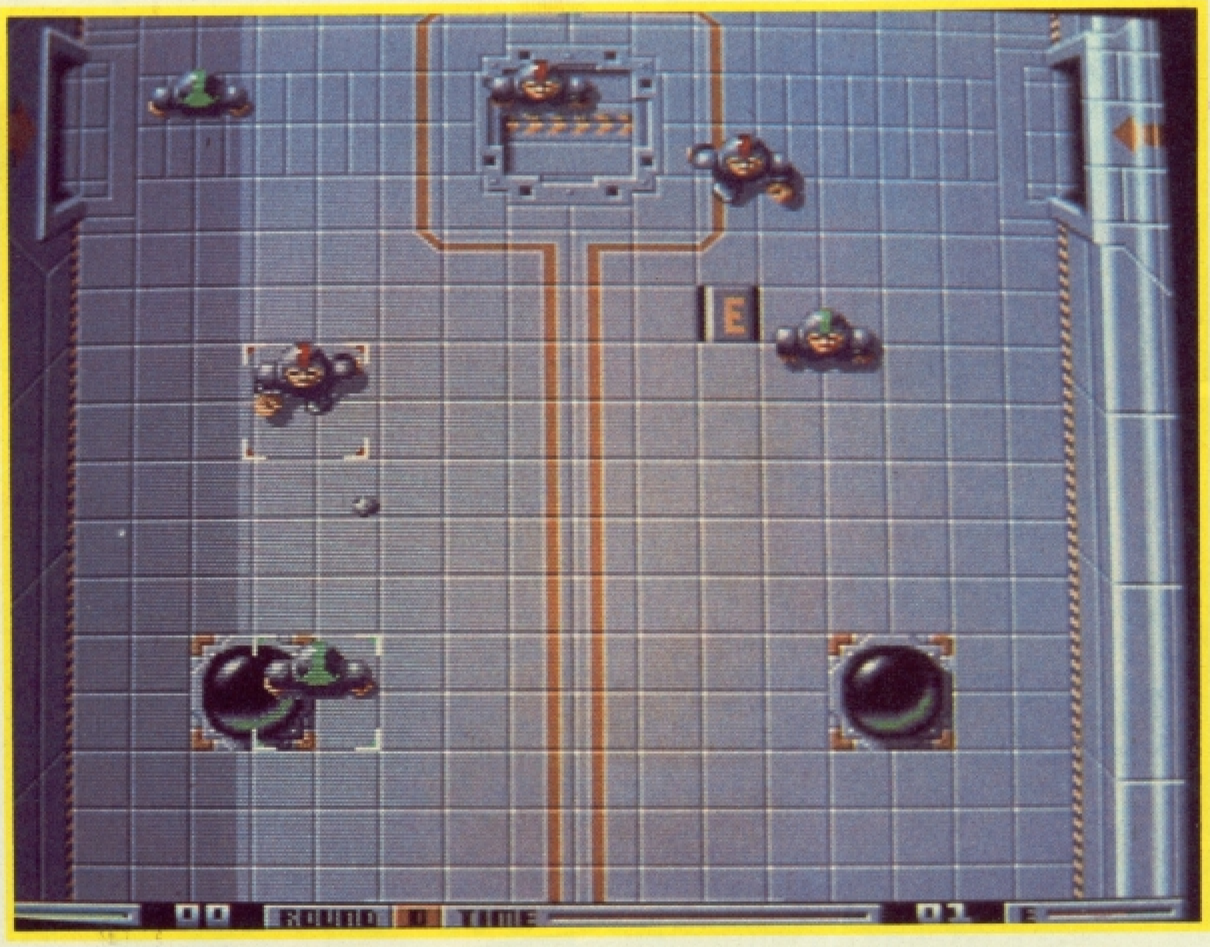
LEAGUE TABLE

TEAM	GF	GA	MF	MA	MD	PD	L	POINTS
PAVO	006	005	001	000	000	001	▶	00130
PERSEUS	004	000	001	000	000	001	▶	00120
VELA	003	001	001	000	000	001	▶	00115
CASTOR	003	002	001	000	000	001	▶	00115
AURIGA	002	001	001	000	000	001	▶	00110
MIRA	005	006	000	001	000	001	▶	00025
TUCANA	002	003	000	001	000	001	▶	00010
VOLANS	001	003	000	001	000	001	▶	00005
ANTLIA	001	002	000	001	000	001	▶	00005
VERNA	000	004	000	001	000	001	▶	00000
DORADO	000	000	000	000	000	000	▶	00000

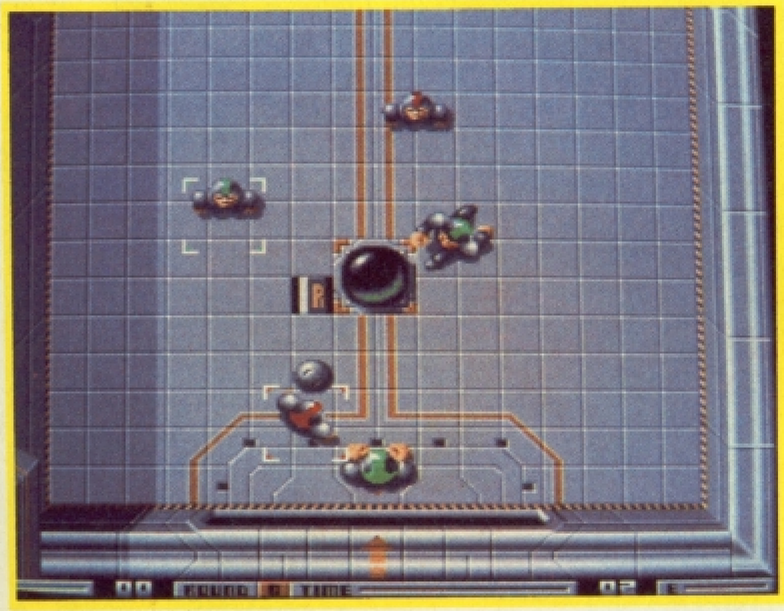
Let's have a look at the old scoreboard.

SPEED

Image Works
Price: £24.99



Get the sonofabitch!


Wimbledon in training.

In a game as warped and violent as this one, corruption naturally fits in quite nicely, and corruption there is. At various points, items will appear on the track. These range from weapon tiles, which basically turn the ball into a weapon, effectively knocking out any opposing players who try to catch it, through to an item that reverses the opponent's control — just like a tab of ecstacy.

You can also pick up credits and this is where the dodgy dealing comes in. Credits are useful things. Credits can be used to buy extra time, a useful investment if you are just one goal behind at the end of a game. They can also be used to buy extra goals, bribe officials, reduce the opposition's skill, and increase your own.

Speedball also comes complete with a wide and extensive set of options. These range from starting a league or knockout championship against the computer, or playing a two player league that can last anything up to 100 weeks. Thankfully there's a full save/load option.

Graphics are fab. The vertical scrolling of the pitch is amazingly smooth and the full screen format works really well. The definition of the characters is very clear, and the photographs you get of the leader of each team, and the fist which impatiently pounds an armoured leg whilst the game waits for you to make a decision is comic book quality.

Sound takes the form of a particularly boppy tune and some nice sampled effects for ricochets, tackles and goals. It's all pretty atmospheric stuff, and the horn which sounds at the end is a gas.

If you haven't got an Amiga this could provide the incentive to go out and buy one. It's the most compelling, addictive and fun footy/combat hybrid I've ever played. Period.

Tony Dillon

It's a definite improvement Vinny.



BALL

SOUND	**85%**
GRAPHICS	**89%**
LASTABILITY	**95%**
PLAYABILITY	**96%**

92%





"There we were, okay yah, in our GTi, okay, playing this frightfully good game, okay . . . . ."

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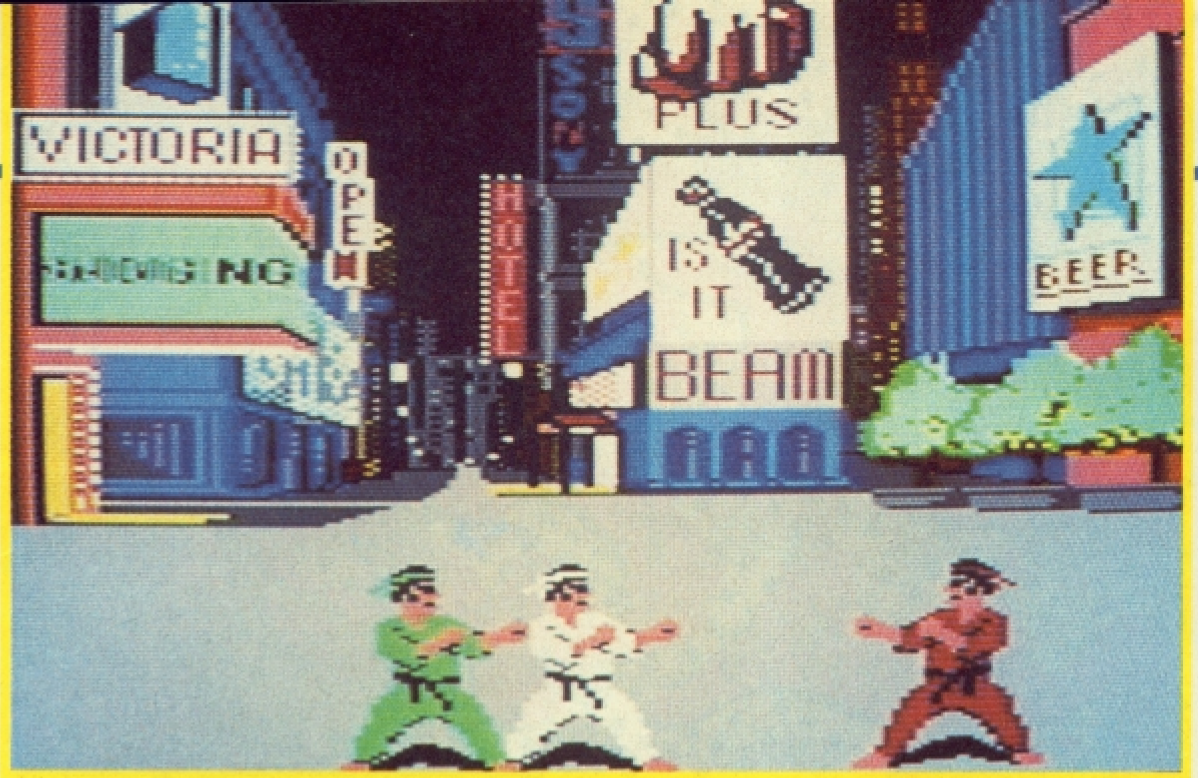
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Shaping up . . .

EXPLODING FIST+

. . . and laying down.



Firebird
Price:
£9.99 cass
£12.99 disk

Somewhat belatedly Firebird have decided that what the world is holding its breath for is an update of the mighty *Way of the Exploding Fist*.

That puts them in the somewhat ironic position of trailing behind *IK+*, the System 3 game which originally cloned the Melbourne House original. Now the clone chain comes full circle with Firebird slavishly following Archer Maclean with a three man free-for-all and extra bonus levels.

The game begins with three fighters standing before an uptown neon lit street corner sorting out their differences. The idea is simply to qualify for each successive round (there are ten) by not being eliminated by the other kung fuists.

You can do this by scoring points for landing blows on either of the opponents. An accurate shot will gain two points if you land it on a head or the body, whilst a half contact to these spots or a leg hit gets one point. Illuminate all five lights and you'll qualify for the next bout. There's also a time limit and if you stay ahead then you'll qualify that way. Each bout gets tougher and tougher.

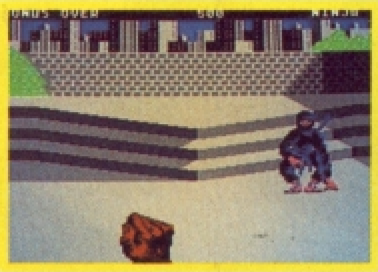
Successive rounds are followed by a bonus level in which you face hordes of ninjas climbing over a wall armed only with poisonous darts. Hit them before they reach you and you'll rack up a large bonus, but sooner or later they'll overwhelm you.

In terms of animation little has changed from the original. There are a couple of new moves including a neatly executed cartwheel, and a rib tickling elbow. But where *Fist+* disappoints is in the saminess of the gameplay and the unchanging backgrounds. Where *IK+* took the original theme and developed it with brilliant graphics and extra speed, this remains rooted to the old format.

Beam Software, who wrote the original, really haven't stretched themselves this time. Even the sound has no new effects, whilst the tune is actually considerably worse.

I can't see *Fist+* setting the software world alight with clones and a new eagerness to play anything classed as a beat 'em up like its original did. After all we've moved on since them. Ahem.

Mike Pattenden



GRAPHICS	79%
SOUND	61%
PLAYABILITY	63%
LASTABILITY	77%

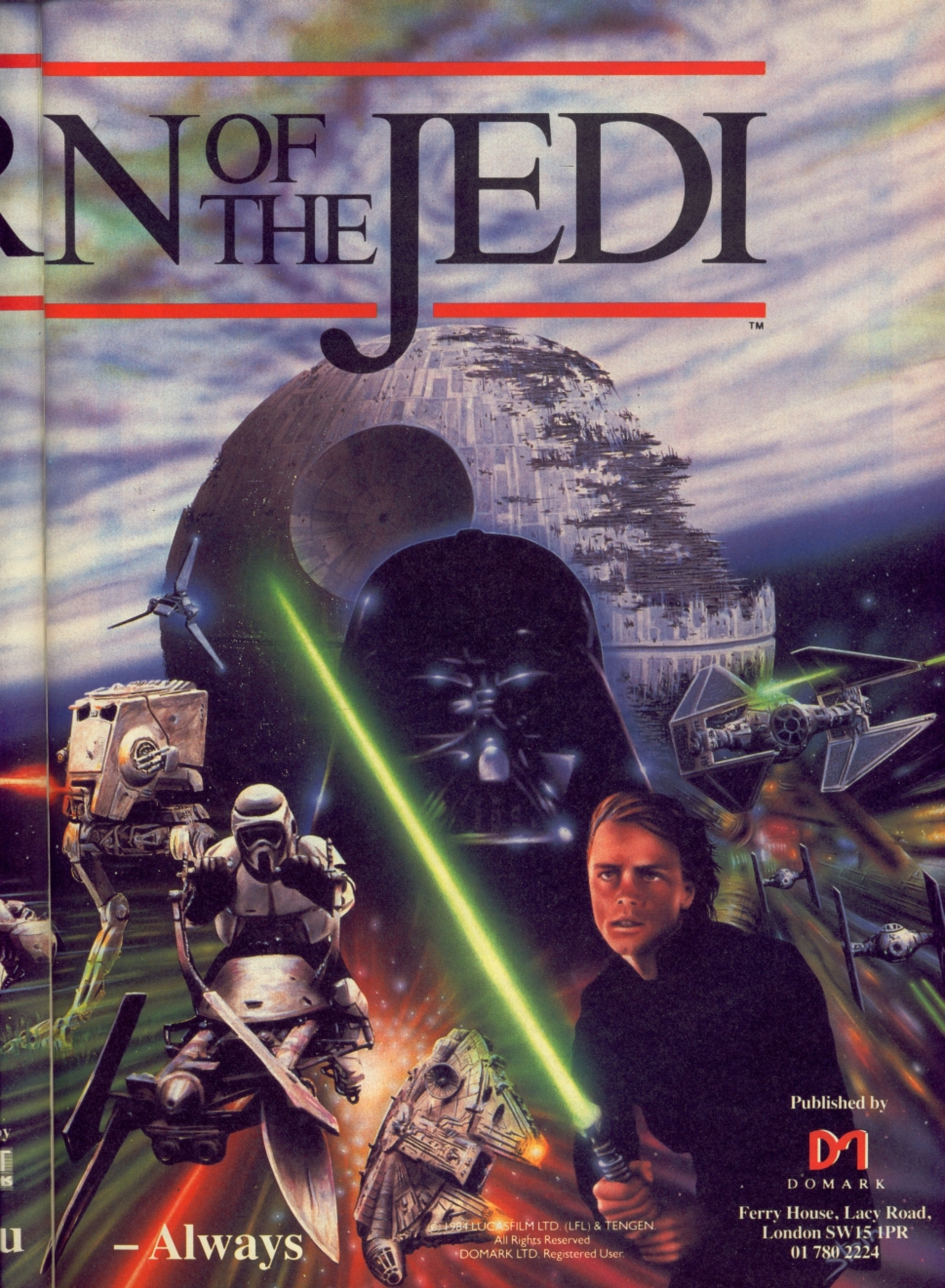
75%



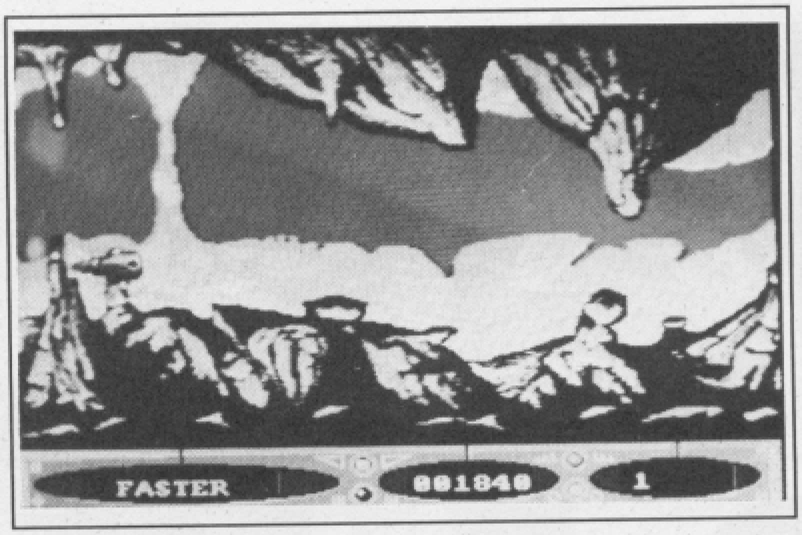
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Atari ST screen shots


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PHANTOM FIGHTER

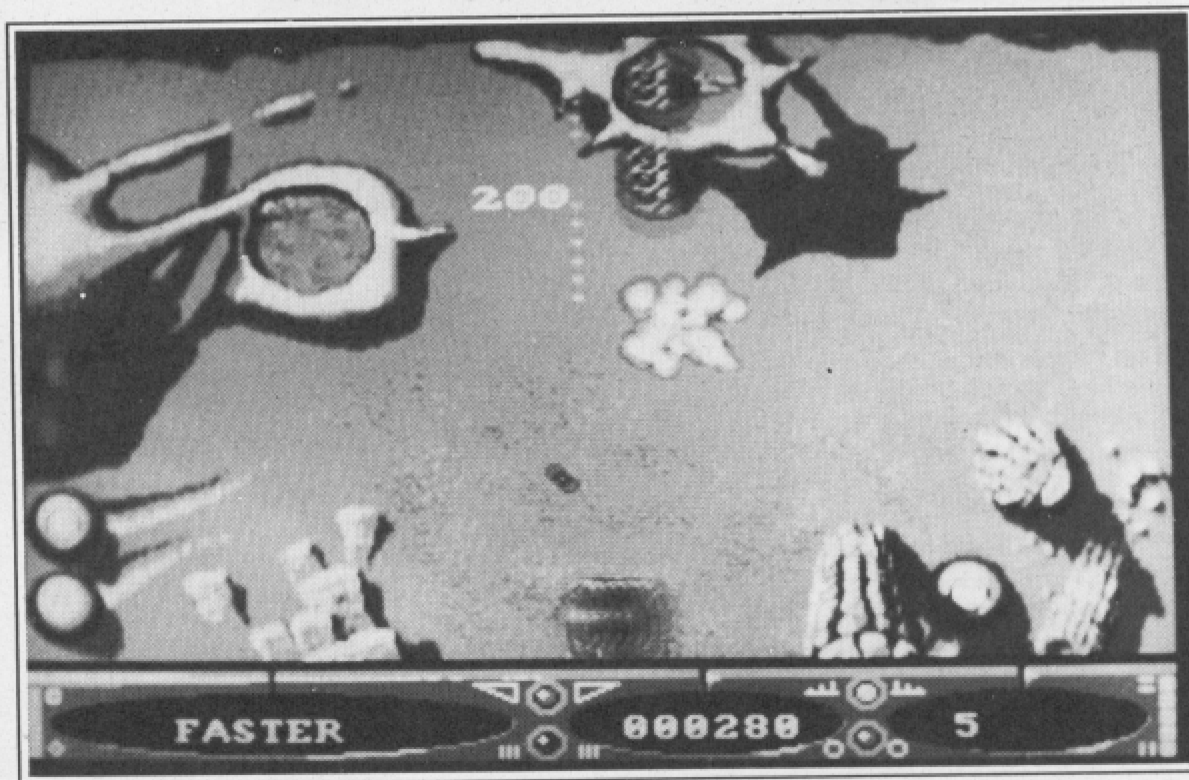


Horizontally hum drum . . .

Following the dire *Vixen*, Martech have once again launched themselves into the Amiga market with, surprise, surprise, a progressivly scrolling shoot 'em up. I won't bore you with some pseudo science-fiction scenario: suffice it to say that you pilot a horrible wobbling spaceship across alternately horizontal and vertically scrolling landscapes, facing swarms of baddies and having to defeat an end-of-level meanie before commencing battle on the next landscape.

The progressive nature of the game sticks to the now-standard routine: defeating a set number of waves sees the appearance of a small icon bearing a letter. Repeatedly shooting the icon alters the letter, and hence the effect it has on the ship when collected. The additional weaponry includes: F for faster (speed-up); L for laser (forward-firing only, but powerful and rapid); P for plasma (multiple shots); D for double (twice the shots for the same finger-presses); S for sides (side lasers); and H for homing (missiles — speaks for itself really). These are all pretty effective in their own way — except for the homing missiles, which are fine until you reach the end-of-level meanie, at which point they stop homing and become completly useless.

Phantom Fighter also has one or two major drawbacks. First, (and most importantly), it's very, very hard. And it's hard for the wrong reasons: you are frequently called upon to have superhuman reactions (play is all too often accompanied by the cry, 'What hit me!?'). Aliens force you into one area of the screen and then bombard you with missiles, or they rapidly appear from the edge of the screen nearest to your ship, giving zero chance of avoiding them.



. . . and vertically vapid.

Secondly, there isn't enough variety. OK the screen scrolls vertically and horizontally but the backgrounds are pretty much static and the attack waves are hardly the most unusual or innovative. Also, the end-of-level meanies are your average spinning, missile-gobbing end-of-level meanies. No surprises there.

Finally, each level is loaded in separately — and takes 30 seconds. Doesn't sound like much, does it? OK, play your favourite shoot 'em up. Wait half-a-minute between levels and see how long it takes before you start fidgetting.

That's about it really — if you want an average, frustrating shoot 'em up, then look no further. But then, you don't REALLY want that, do you?

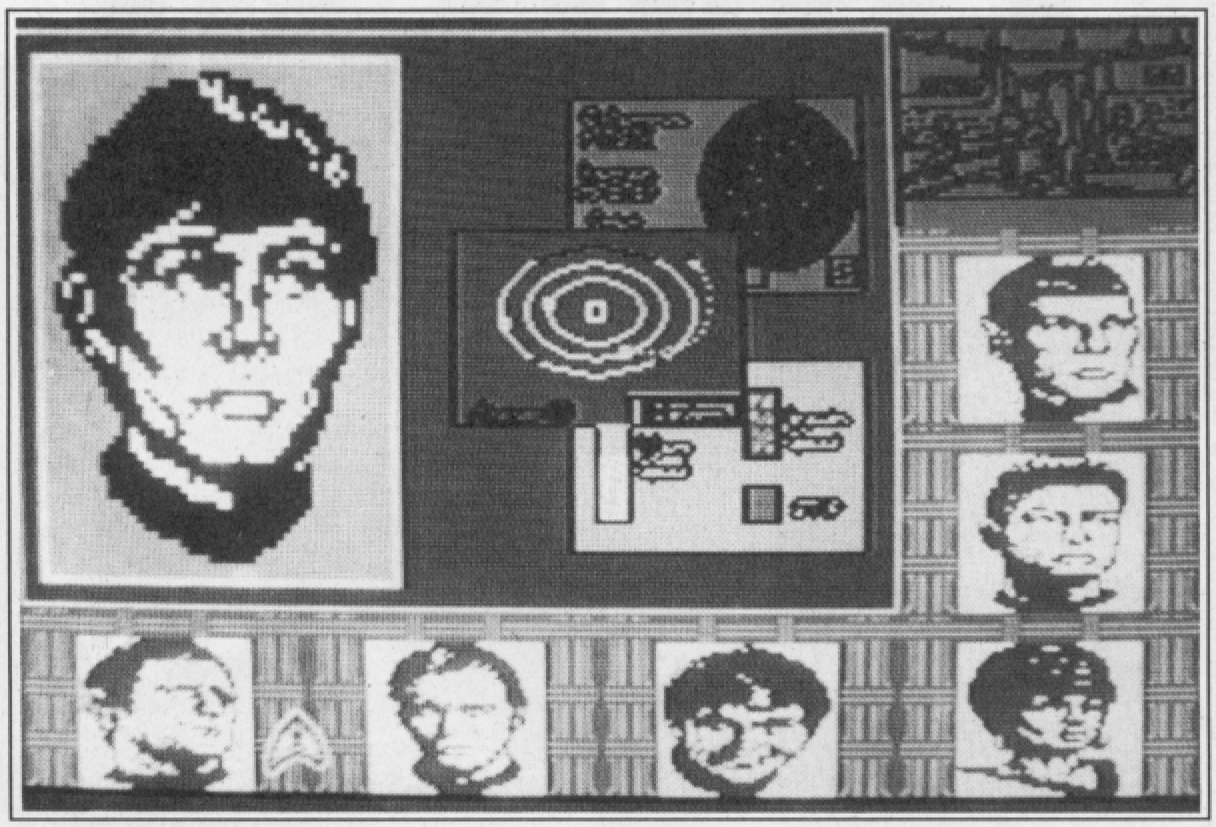
Steve Jarratt

Martech
Price: £24.99

SOUND	53%
GRAPHICS	68%
LASTABILITY	65%
PLAYABILITY	43%

60%

STAR TREK



The crew of the USS Enterprise.

Firebird
Price:
£9.99 cass
£12.99 disk

Well it's been a long time coming but Firebird have completed their five year mission (well, it seems like that long) and Star Trek has finally materialised on the 64.

Genuine Trekkies will be glad to hear that the game, an adventure with a smattering of arcade action, features all the major characters of Gene Rodenberry's mega successful sci-fi TV series.

In this episode the Klingons have discovered a method of mass hypnosis which enables them to take control of Federation Starships. Ships which enter the ominous Quarantine Zone return renegade and open fire on their own fleet. Starfleet Command in their wisdom have decided that the thing to do is send The Enterprise into the Quarantine Zone and then seal it up with a Klein Sphere — sort of intergalactic clingfilm.

All actions are carried out by means of a cursor which is positioned over certain control points on the screen. The screen itself is divided into a main display, which initially shows the bridge, and seven secondary screens showing each of the seven officers.

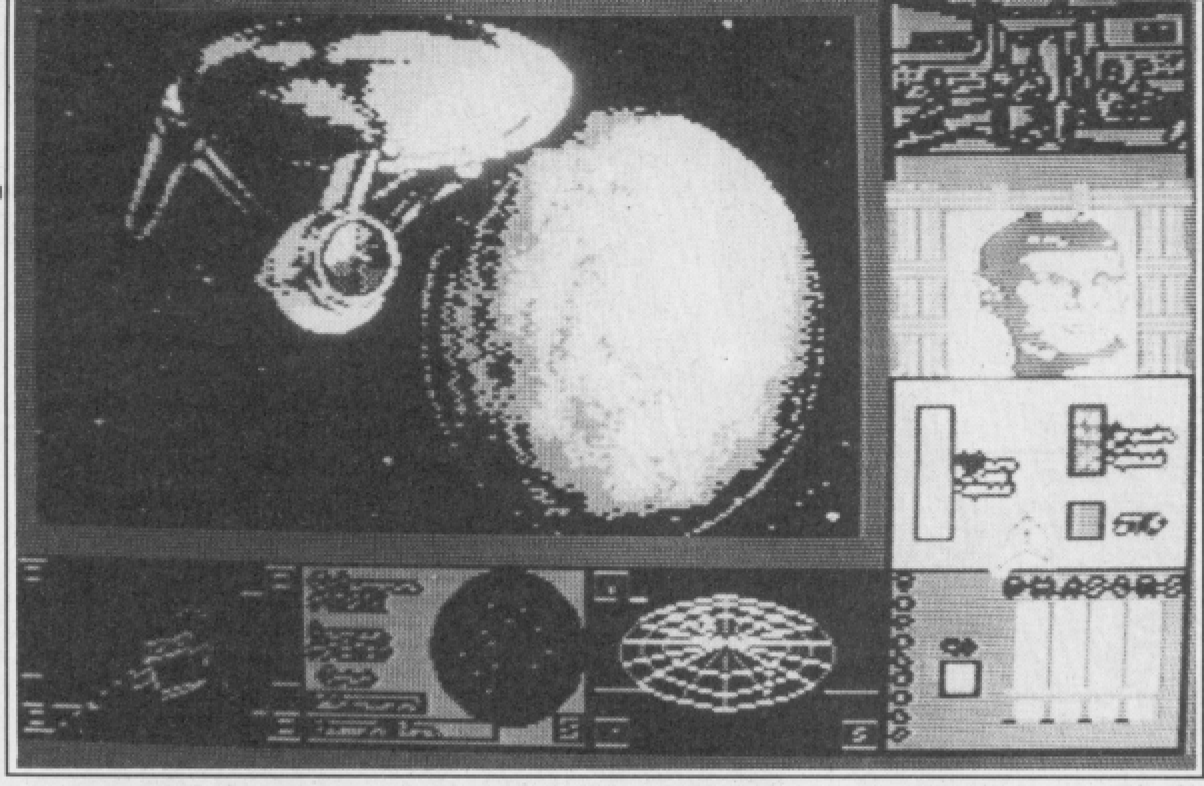
Each character is responsible for different actions. Sulu for navigation, Chekov for weapons, Spock gives data on planets and systems as well as damage reports. Captain Kirk is responsible for orgainsing landing parties and, via you, for making decisions whilst on the planet surface. Scotty, Uhura and Dr McCoy have fairly limited reporting rôles.

The first thing to do is set a course for a neighbouring system. This is done by first clicking on Sulu which brings the Starglobe screen into the main display area. The starglobe is a three dimensional representation of the Quarantine Zone which can be rotated so that you can plot a course to any system. You can click on a system then ask Spock to give you the run down on it. The information, though limited, gives you the important bits — whether it is Federation, Romulan or Klingon controlled and the number of planets.

Once you have decided on a system you must engage warp drive to get to it. This is done by pulling onto the main display another of Sulu's screens which shows very simple power controls. Once the system is reached a further sub-window can be pulled into the main display area. This shows the planetary system in more detail. Once again planets can be selected and analysed by Spock before you set a course for orbit and engage impulse drive.

En route to your destination system you will almost certainly come under attack from either Klingons or rebel Federation Starships. This time it's Chekov who controls the action. First you select a target

64 Screen Scene



Klingons on the starboard bow, anyone?



Scotty despairs for his poor wee engines.

using the tracking screen, choose between phaser banks and the more powerful photon torpedoes, then let them have it on the targeting screen. This is the nearest you get to action shoot 'em up style and to be honest it's not very near. If its laser blastin' action you're looking for you won't find it here.

The adventure begins when you beam down to a planet surface with a landing party. You can beam down up to six crew members to life supporting planets. Once you get there it's very much a move forward, open door, take object affair. When you come across an object you can poll each of the landing party in turn for suggestions and then pick the right one.

Your mission is to roam the Quarantine Zone, fight off attacking Klingons and rogue ships, and beam down to planets and collect all the relevant objects to help you overcome the Klingon plot.

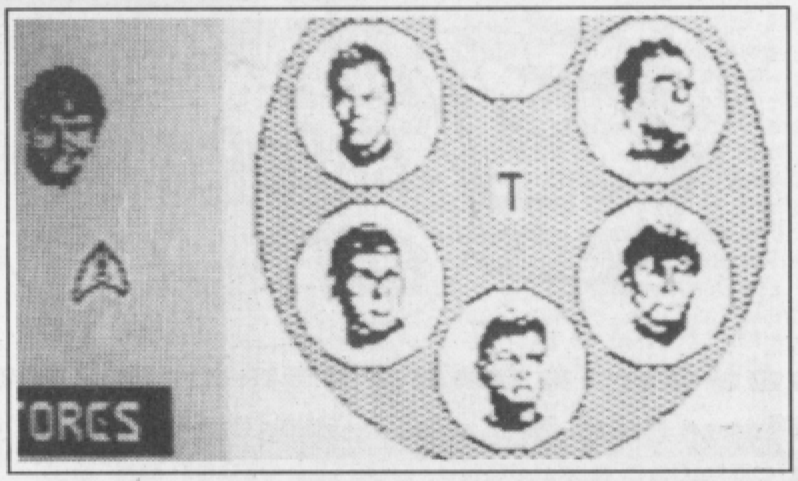
As an arcade adventure, *Star Trek — the Rebel Universe* works pretty well. But I have to say that in other respects it's a bit of a disappointment. The graphics are nothing to write home about, the head and shoulders portraits of the crew are a reasonable likeness, the bridge is spot on and there's a good pic of a planet (the same one) every time you go into orbit, but everything on the operational side is extremely crude. The same goes for sound. The General Quarters siren is nothing like the original, a whistle signals incoming communications and there is an almost negligible blip when you fire the phasers or photon torpedoes. So much could have been added to the feel of the game if Firebird had attempted to match the original brilliant sound effects.

Lastly, I think more could have been made of the characters. Apart from the physical likeness, there is nothing to suggest that it is Jim Kirk in command, none of Spock's emotionless logic or Scotty's excitable nature. Not so much as a "He's dead Jim" from Bones. I think Star Trek fans who have endured the long wait will expect and probably deserve something better.

Ken McMahon

AMIGA UPDATE

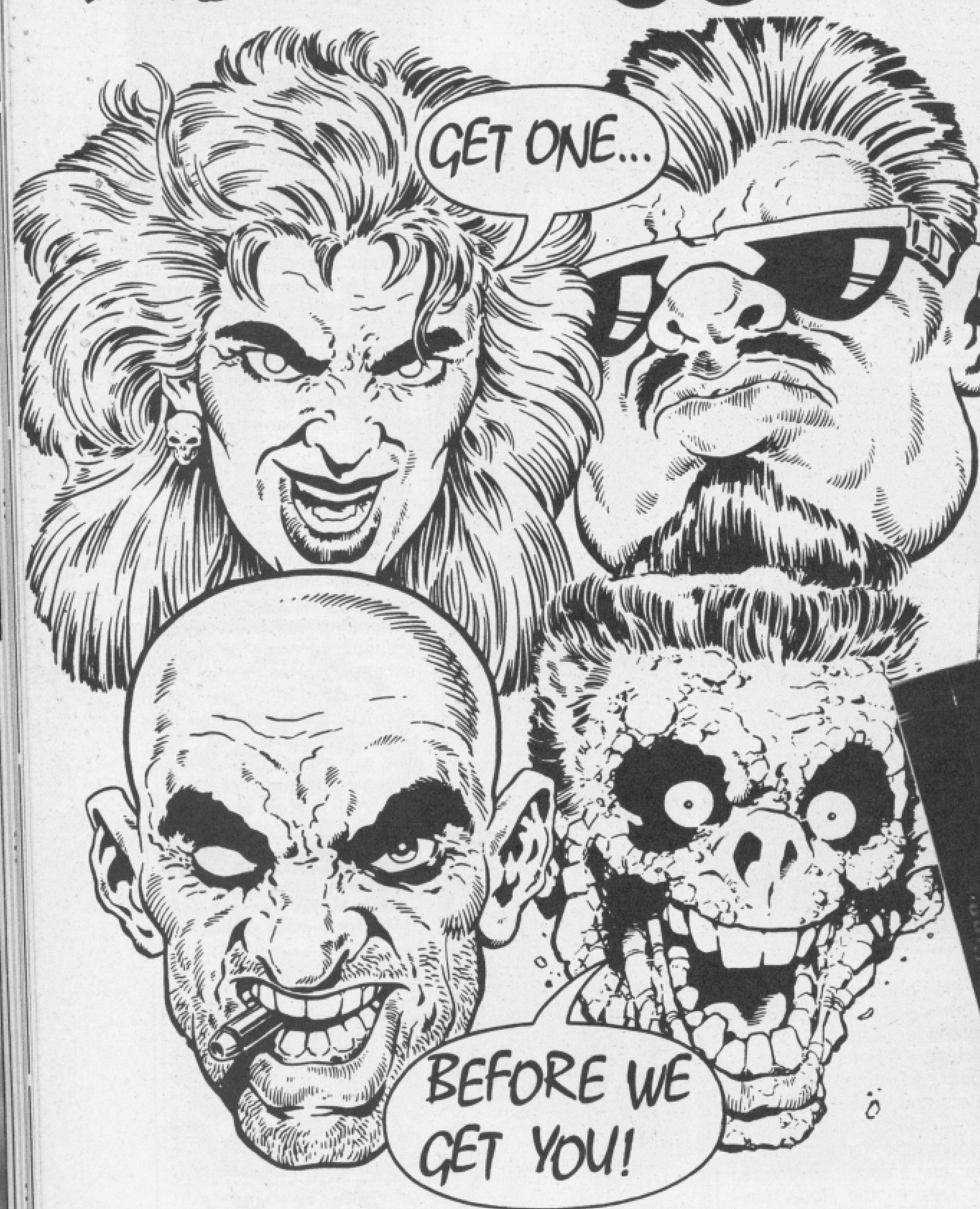
Despite its existance on the ST already Firebird say they have no plans for an Amiga version.



SOUND	**33%**
GRAPHICS	**45%**
LASTABILITY	**69%**
PLAYABILITY	**71%**

66%

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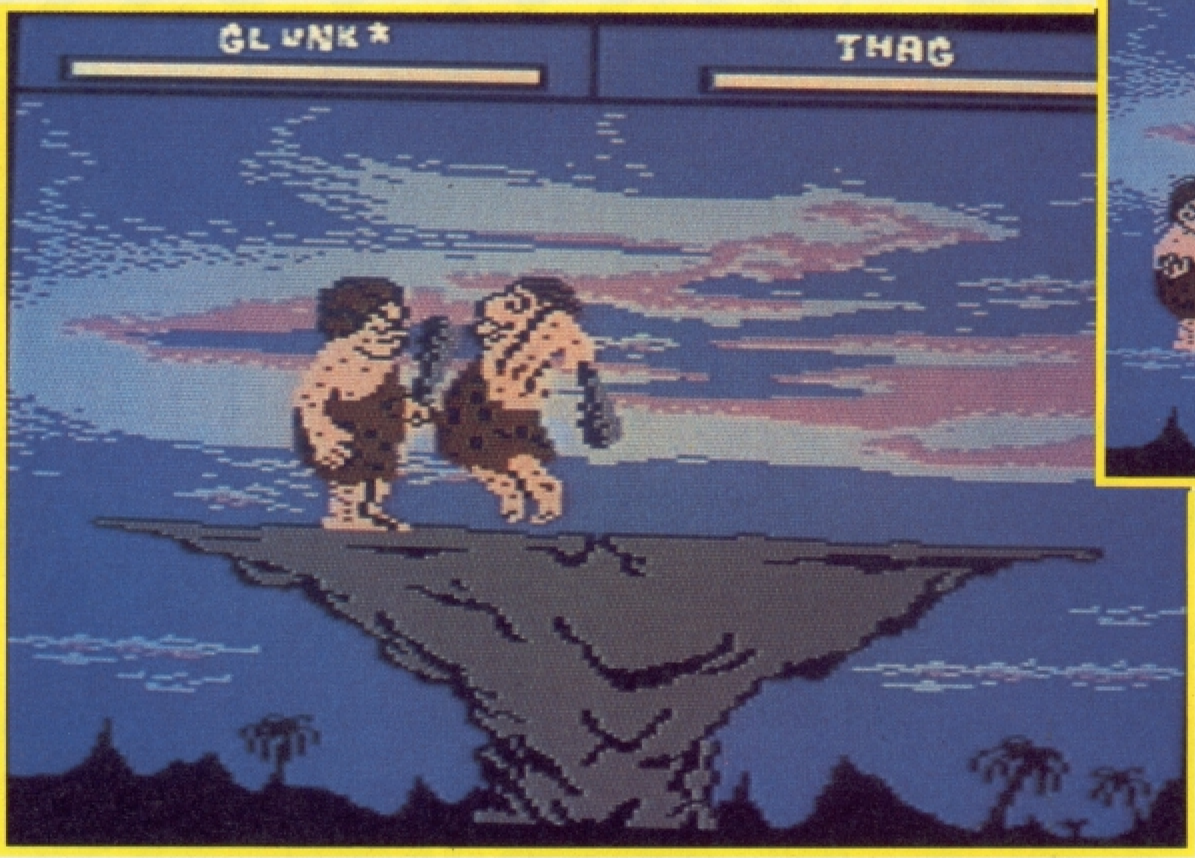
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Enter the Olympic Challenge with Daley Thompson as you 'work out' in the gym, where your efforts will directly affect your performance in the competition itself – another first from Ocean.
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Heads . . . you lose!





CAVEMAN

Despite its title, *Ugh-Lympics* is one of those games which manages to prove that the 64 is far from dead.

The title credit is an excellent mickey take of the Epyx sims. A little Twentieth century Olympian runs on to the screen carrying the Olympic flame, runs up the Olympic steps, lights the torch and then is crushed to death by a huge stone *Ugh-Lympics* logo, then a completely nutty cave man bounds on to the screen like he's got a hornets' nest in his knickers.

The first priority is selecting your very own pet Ugh-Lympian. Choose from the strongest, the most skilled, the weakest, and share in their sadness or their joy as they catapault a tribal mate off the edge of a cliff.

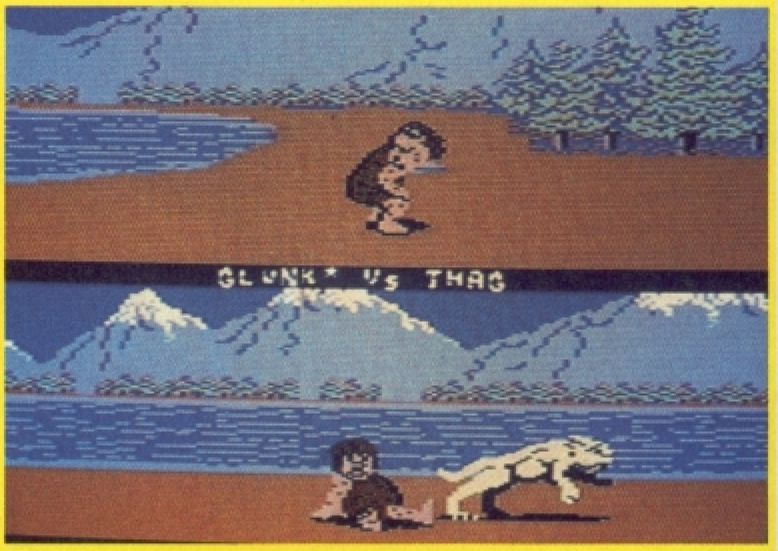
Mate Tossing is the first event and, as the title suggests, it's your woman that gets thrown in this precursor of hammer throwing. By rotating the joystick anti-clockwise the caveman gradually starts to move. Accelerating the motion speeds him up and as soon as the cartoon-like speed lines start appearing, release the button to send your partner sailing through the air. After she has landed she gives you a visual confirmation on how well you've done, thumbs up for good, a shoulder shrug for average, and a thumbs down for bad.

Next follows *Dino Racing*. Two dinos, with riders, take their positions at the top and bottom of the split screen display. Spur the dino on by tapping the joystick right, or for turbocharged performance club it over the head. Then it runs on automatic avoiding all the obstacles itself. The turbo only lasts for a short time, but can be repeated with the risk of exhausting the poor beastie which will leave it floundering on the ground.

Of all the events *Clubbing* has to be the funniest. Set on the edge of a large pinnacle of rock, the two cavemen have to battle for all they are worth. Before the combat each caveman has to try to wind the

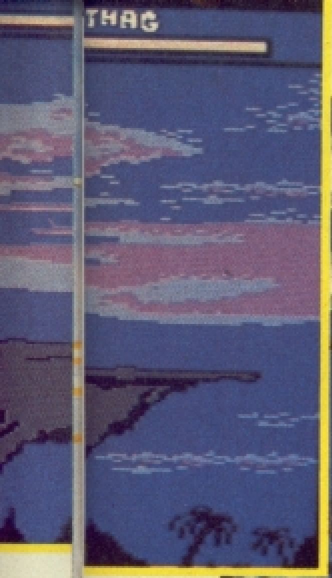
Electronic Arts
Price:
£9.99 cass
£14.99 disk

Race a sabre-tooth.





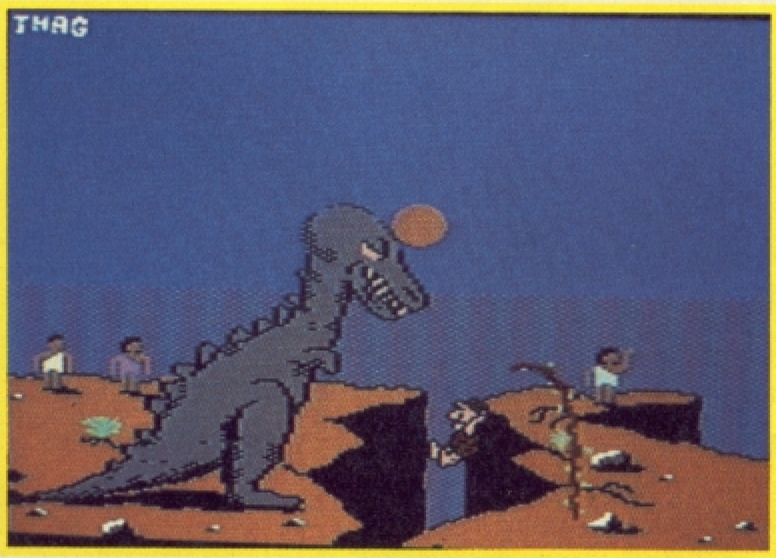
Choose a mug.



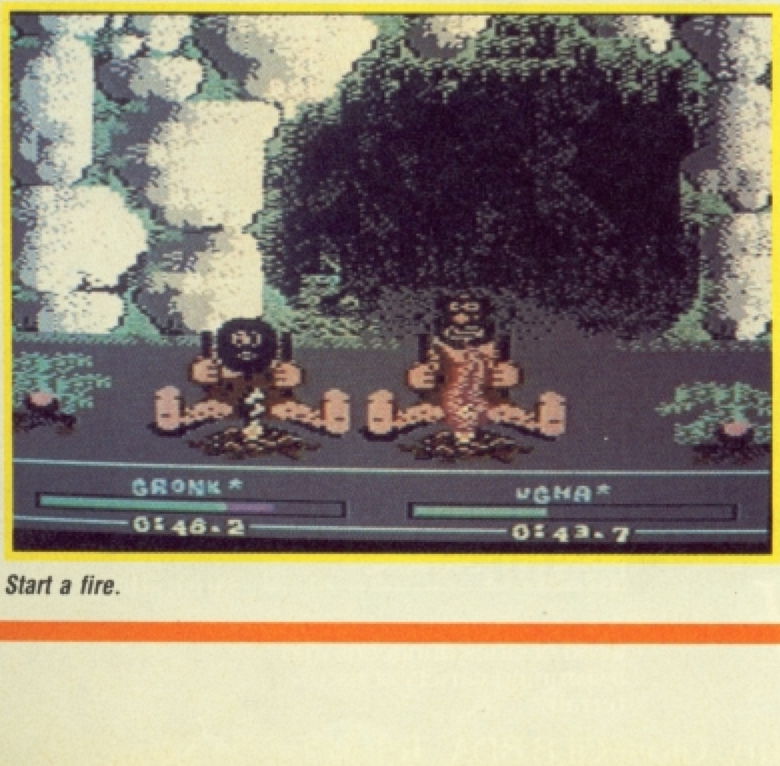


The Ugh-lympic opening ceremony.

UGH-LYMPICS



Vault a dino.



Start a fire.

opponent up as much as possible, the effect being produced by the player(s) with the joystick standing on a chair and then waggling for all they're worth, so that the human side produces an accurate representation of the cavemen in the game, leaving them suitably knackered for the combat. The aggressive moves are a club over the head, a smack in the mouth and a knee jab. The head clubs are great, your caveman holds a mid-air position briefly then with a quick tug on the stick brings his club crashing down on the opponent's skull, rendering the victim helpless whilst a display of stars floats above his head. The animation sequences in this event are excellent.

Three other events, the *Dino Vault, Fire Making* and the *Sabre Race* make up the rest of the events. *Fire Making* is the only real bad apple (pretty tedious stuff involving rubbing sticks together). Otherwise I can't find any real faults aside from the multi-loading, but that occurs in most sports sims.

The graphics really need to be observed during the demo mode to be best appreciated rather than trying to catch a glance at your opponent's antics in mid-play. They really are of cartoon quality, with excellent effects aside from great definition. It made me laugh, which is more than I can say for most other so-called cartoon-quality games.

If you have a 64 I'll have to recommend this, if you've only got an Amiga, well you'll just have to be envious of us old 8 bitters.

Mark Patterson

SOUND	**76%**
GRAPHICS	**96%**
LASTABILITY	**88%**
PLAYABILITY	**94%**

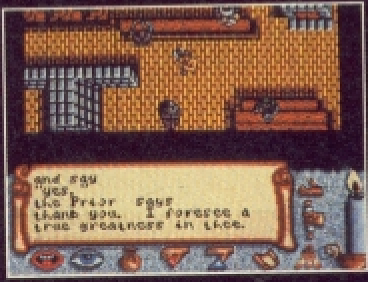
86%



Commodore Amiga



The Knight one of three character classes.



Atari ST

Converse through simple commands and menus.

DISCOVER AN ARCADE ADVENTURE WITH HIDDEN DEPTHS

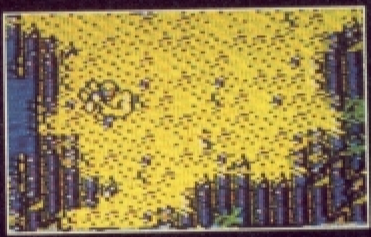
Discover Times Of Lore, Origin's first adventure on cassette. Acclaimed British designer Chris Roberts has taken the best of arcade and adventure – fast and furious combat, stunning graphics and animation, unrelenting danger and challenge – and introduced the depth of a classic fantasy role playing game.

Entirely joystick driven, Times Of Lore continuously tests your combat skills while you gradually become involved in a compelling plot. With 13,000 screen locations, a powerful but easy-to-use menu and icon interface, scores of interactive characters and music by Martin Galway, it ventures further than other arcade adventures.

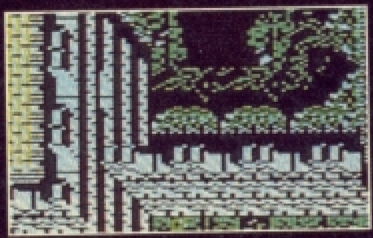
Origin have broken new ground in Times Of Lore. Isn't it time you did too? Available for: C64/128 Cassette £9.95, Disk £14.95, Spectrum 48/128K Cassette £9.95, Spectrum +3 Disk £14.95, Amstrad 464/6128 Cassette £9.95, Disk £14.95, Atari ST £24.95, IBM/PC & Compatibles £24.95, Apple £19.95, Commodore Amiga £24.95.



C64/128



Spectrum



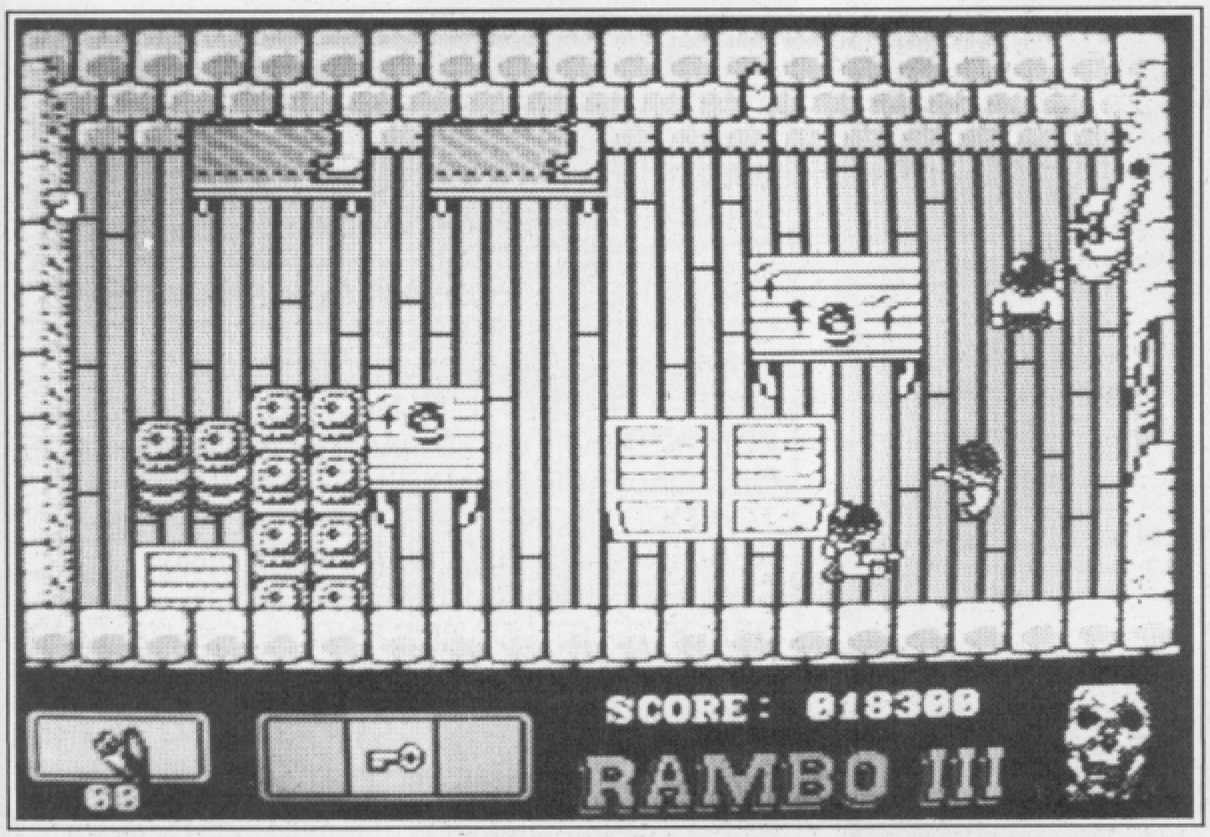
Amstrad

Journey through an immense world of cities, dungeons, and a stunning variety of natural terrain.

ORIGIN

Origin, MicroProse, 2 Market Place, Tetbury, Glos, GL8 8DA. Tel: 0666 54326

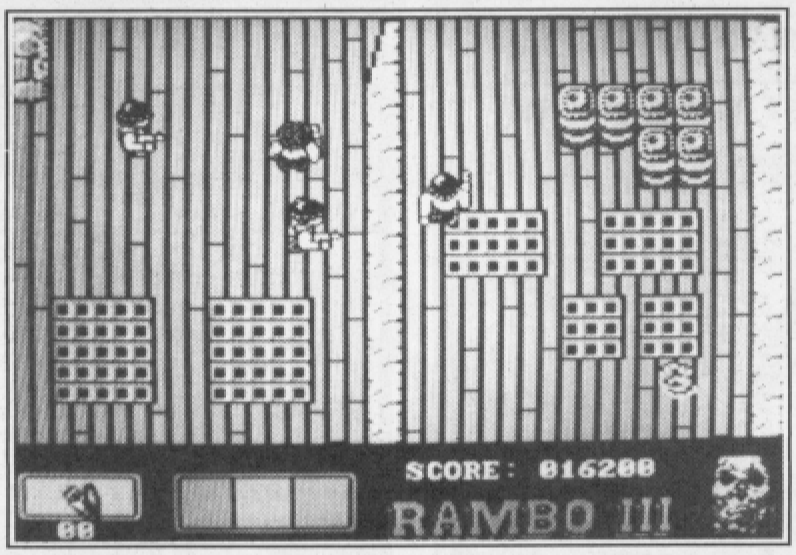
RAMBO 3



He's mean, moody and covered in scars, yes he's back slurring words, ignoring the new era of East-West detente in an action-packed all-American jaunt through a Russian fort. This time his beloved mentor Colonel Trautman has been captured by the commies while on a super top secret mission in Afghanistan.

John Rambo's first mission is to locate the Colonel who is now being tortured. Along the way Rambo has more than ample opportunity to rescue Afghan prisoners and waste as many of the enemy as possible. Yet the first noticeable thing about *Rambo III* is that it's not a straightforward shoot 'em up. It's a more subtle arcade adventure, with simple puzzles that even Rambo himself could work out.

The first level is set inside the fort itself and holds most of the objects essential to complete the game. At first it all adds up; the infra red goggles go up with the goggles' battery pack and so on: then I came to a door which the computer obligingly notified me was electric after shooting Rambo full of 25,000 volts. Needless to say I searched solid for ten games and two nights before I found a small lever, cunningly disguised as a section of wall, retracted when Rambo touched it. Dashing back to the electric door I found out it was no longer electrified — diving through I promptly trod on a mine. RIP Rambo.



Pinkos on the other side.

Stage two is pretty much the same, except this time Rambo has to prime bombs left in strategic locations around the Russian compound in order to blow the place sky high.

Section three provides the main bulk of the blasting action. Rambo is now in possession of a tank and has become twice as violent as before. The joystick guides the crosshair around the screen and the fire button launches a volly of bullets at an unsuspecting Russian. Then drive off to the Afghan border and you're home free, until of course *Rambo IV*.

Rambo III provided some surprisingly absorbing computer entertainment, though it lacks the great Martin Galway theme that accompanied the original. For the most part the graphics are neat and to the point.

All in all a good though not stunningly original little games package from an apparently weak film licence.

Mark Patterson

Price:
£9.95 cass
£14.95 disk

GRAPHICS	**79%**
SOUND	**75%**
PLAYABILITY	**82%**
LASTABILITY	**81%**

81%

NEUROMANCER

Based on the 'Cyber-Punk' novel of the same name by William Gibson, *Neuromancer* stars you as a cyberspace cowboy, looking out for yourself in Chiba City in 2058. The skyline is dominated by the corporate towers of Japanese electronics giants while down below, the streets are the domain of the city's low-life; techno-criminals, racketeers and other scum.

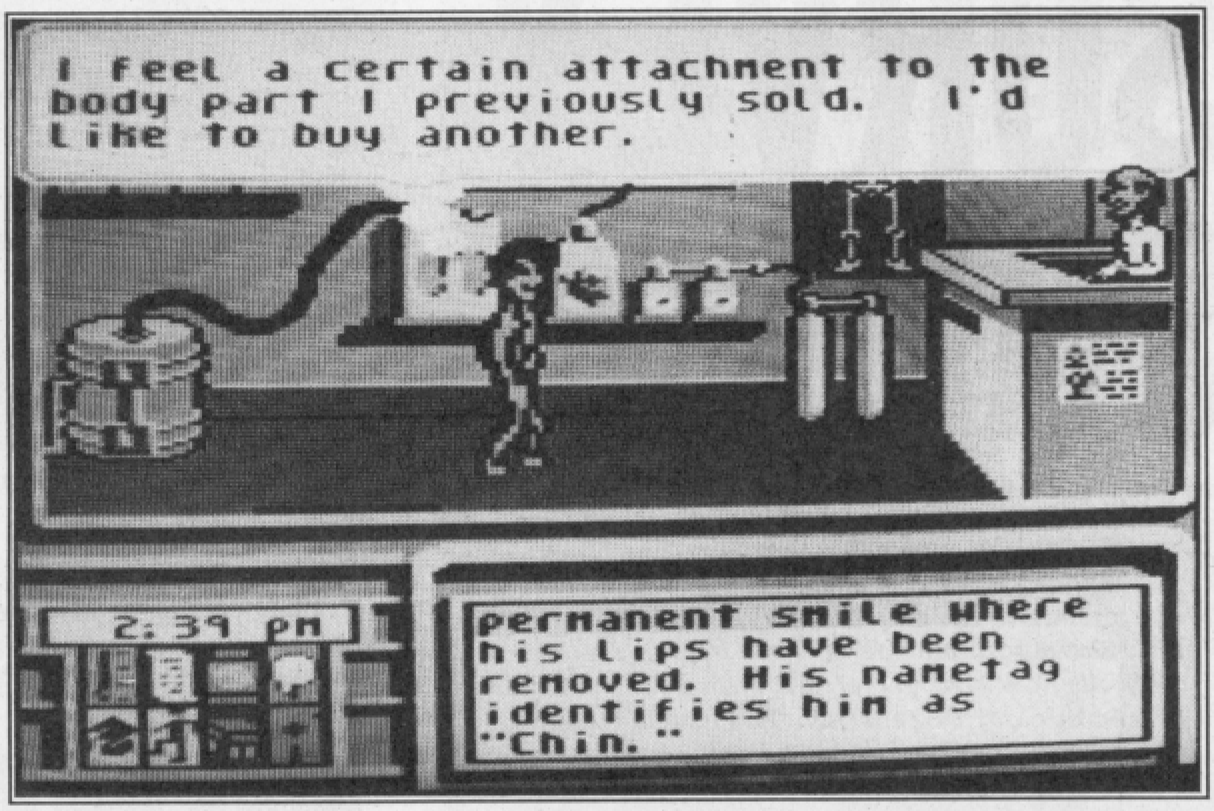
A cyber cowboy is a sort of 21st century hacker. He breaks into company databases to access secret information and software — useful stuff if you want to stay alive. The real trick though is to go one step further and access 'the Matrix' — Cyberspace itself. Cyberspace is information represented in its 'pure' form. The idea being that with so much information knocking around, nobody will be able to make much sense of it.

The game takes place on two levels, in 'real life' you can wander around the 3D flip-screen city, talk to people, do some shopping, get arrested and all the other things that citizens get up to. The other level is Cyberspace, in which you can attempt to gain access to bases by overcoming the defence software and hardware. In order to do this successfully you will need to pick up a few things in the real world before attempting to access Cyberspace.

You function in the real world by means of a pointer and six icons which allow you to walk, talk, connect with the PAX, use things and skills you've picked up and save the game. The PAX is a bulletin board/news/homebanking service and is well worth a look early on in the game to pick up some hot tips.



A charming young cyber punkette.



Buying some body parts.

To access the commlink system, via which you can get to Cyberspace, you will need to pick up your deck and comms software which is at the pawn shop. Your deck is, however an abysmally cheap effort which, although giving you normal Commlink access, just isn't good enough to get you into Cyberspace. For that you'll have to raise some cash. A fast way of doing this is to sell some bodyparts. The downside being that the cheap plastic replacements don't work so well and a Cyberspace defence system like ICE or AI — which drains your brain, will undoubtedly leave you for dead. One good thing about being dead is that the body shop will revitalise you, but the charge will be all the cash you're carrying — so travel light.

Things you can pick up in the real world to help you crack the Cyberspace systems include, on the software side, ICEbreaking software, better comms and decoders. Skill chips can be implanted in your brain to make you interrogate like a cop, speak foreign languages and so on. Having a whizz bang Cyberspace deck helps (you can buy good ones at Asano computing) as does having a lot of dosh. For one thing you are charged for connect time on Commlink, so no money, no fun.

You could hardly fault *Neuromancer* for lack of depth. There's a hell of a lot to it. Unlike a lot of games I could mention it has a sense of humour, though the plot is not so simple as to be laughable. The graphics are nothing to shout about, walking around town can be frustratingly slow (it's a multi-load job with four discs), but in a good RPG that's not too important. *Neuromancer* has got all the important bits right.

Ken McMahon

Electronic Arts
Price: £16.95

SOUND	N/A
GRAPHICS	70%
LASTABILITY	80%
PLAYABILITY	85%

81%

CU AND OUR SURVEY SAID...

Dear Matey!
Thanks for buying Commodore User. Here's your chance to tell us what you do and don't like about the magazine and suggest improvements.
Just to show how grateful we are every reply is entered into our Prize Draw. The first 50 names picked out of the hat get a free game — Amiga or 64.
Cheers!
Mike Pattenden
Editor

1a) Are you. . .
Male ☐ Female ☐

b) How old are you?
Under 12 ☐
13 ☐
14 ☐
15 ☐
15 ☐
17 ☐
18 ☐
19 ☐
Over 19 ☐

c) Are you.
At school ☐
At college/University ☐
At work (full time) ☐
At work (part time) ☐
Unemployed ☐

2) Which of the following, if any, do you own?
Commodore 64 ☐
Commodore Amiga ☐
Other Commodore ☐
Other non-Commodore ☐

3) Do you intend to buy an Amiga, if so when? If not go to section (b).
Before Christmas '88 ☐
Between Jan-March '89 ☐
Between April-Oct '89 ☐
Between Nov '89-Feb '90 ☐
After Feb '90 ☐

b) I do not intend to buy an Amiga because.
i) I already own one. ☐
ii) I'm happy with my C64/128 etc ☐
ii) I'm getting with playing computer games. ☐
iv) I'll probably buy an Atari ST. ☐
v) Other. ☐

4) How many issues of Commodore User have you read in the last six months?

	a) Read	b) Bought
1	☐	☐
2	☐	☐
3	☐	☐
4	☐	☐
5	☐	☐
6	☐	☐

5) How many other people have read or looked at this copy of Commodore User?
None ☐
1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
More ☐

6) Which of the following computer magazines do you read regularly (ie. at least one out of every two issues).
Computer and Video Games ☐
Zzap 64 ☐
Commodore Computing Int. ☐
Your Commodore ☐
ACE ☐
The Games Machine ☐
The One ☐
Amiga User Int ☐
Your Amiga ☐
ST Amiga Format ☐
Amiga Computing ☐

7) And which of these do you look at regularly?
2000AD ☐
Viz ☐
Crisis ☐
New Musical Express ☐
Melody Maker ☐
Smash Hits ☐
Kerrang! ☐

8) How interesting do you find each of these regular features?

	Very Interesting	OK	Boring
Buzz	☐	☐	☐
Charts	☐	☐	☐
Cheapo Round-up	☐	☐	☐
Adventure	☐	☐	☐
Letters	☐	☐	☐
Arcades	☐	☐	☐
Tommys Tips	☐	☐	☐
Play to Win	☐	☐	☐
Reviews	☐	☐	☐
Previews	☐	☐	☐
Poster	☐	☐	☐
The Last Word	☐	☐	☐

9) Below is a list of items that could be covered in Commodore User, how often would you like to seem them?

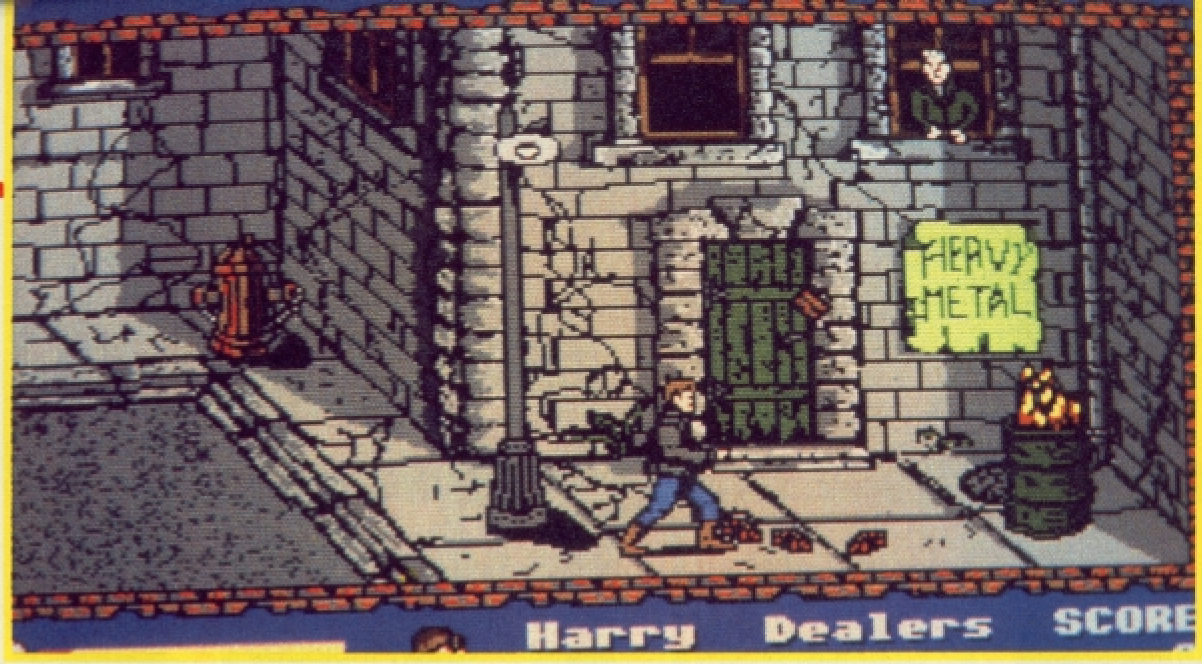
	Every month	Regularly Regularly	Occasion--ally	Never
Future Features	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demo Screens	☐	☐	☐	☐
Role Playing	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other — please specify

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Rap attack in the Bronx.

MANHATTAN DEALERS

The beat 'em up isn't a genre that's particularly well served by the Amiga so far, and a game which combines that with an arcade adventure format *Last Ninja*-style is non-existent. Or

Silmarils
Price: £24.95



Sweet and sour pork balls for starters!

was non-existent until French software house Silmarils waded in with this entertaining slice of violence.

You play Inspector Harry, a (white) policeman fighting the war against drugs on the mean streets of Manhattan.

Harry roams the streets of Harlem, the Bronx, and Chinatown and is variously molested by punks, bikers, chainsaw-wielding nutters, blacks with baseball bats, ninjas, and crack-crazed whores. Most of these are loaded up to the eyeballs with dope which Harry can confiscate when he's laid them out.

The most striking feature about *MD* is its graphics. They're exquisitely well drawn, and the backdrops look strikingly realistic. Odd little touches are really pleasing like the way people lob bricks and even plant pots out the windows at poor old Harry as he goes about his business.

It is these very touches though that reveal *MD*'s weaknesses. It could have been so much better. Once you've visited the ten locations you've just about exhausted the game in terms of exploration. This is particularly annoying because each one takes a separate load to appear. The missions, too, vary little with Harry enmeshed in an interminable round of thrashings in which the assailants have to be knocked down more and more times. It all becomes a bit tedious, and the arcade adventure element is lost in the continual cycle of fights.

Sound too could have been better with some more solid thwacks, and maybe even a sampled chainsaw noise.

What you're feeling after playing *MD* is that the game could have been so much better if they'd bothered to extend it, and taken a little more time. Those streets should have been a lot meaner.

Mike Scorsese

SOUND	60%
GRAPHICS	90%
LASTABILITY	68%
PLAYABILITY	77%
OVERALL	78%

78%

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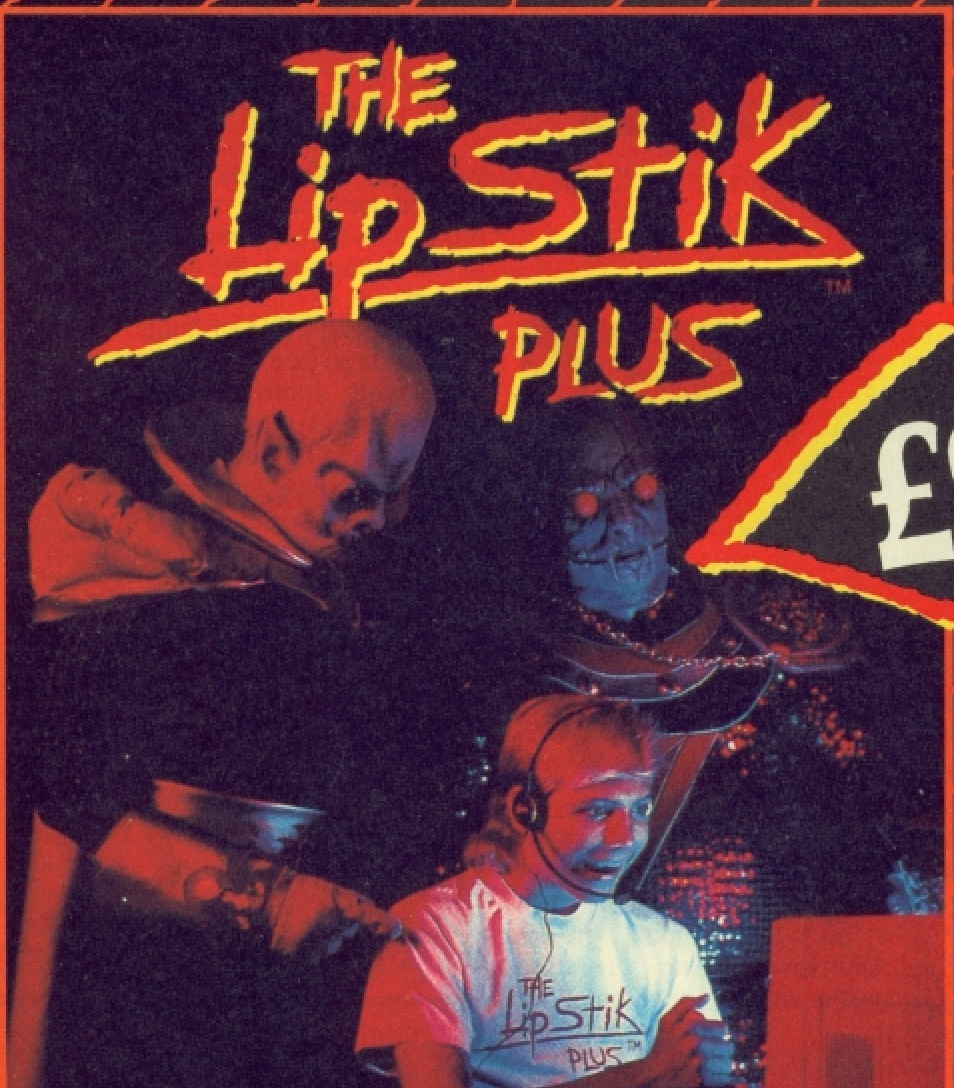
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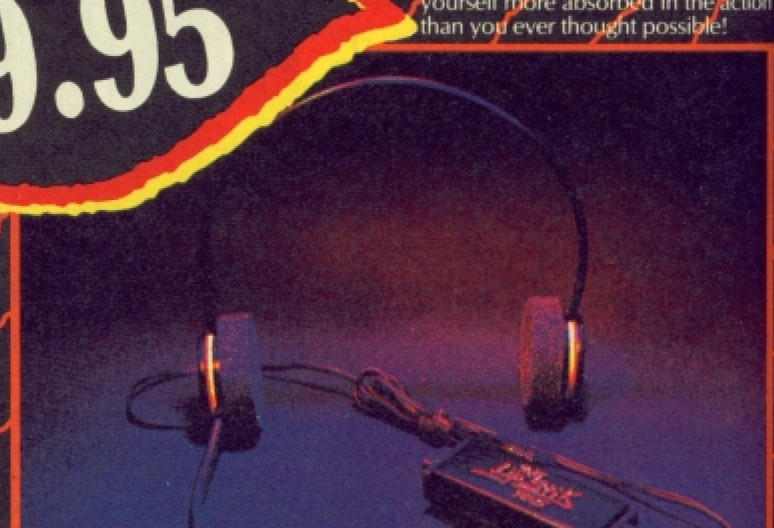
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STAR RAY

Star Ray emerged as one of the shining shoot 'em ups on the Amiga earlier this year. It had superb graphics, great sound and incredible addictivness. In short it is one of the best arcade games on the Amiga. Now 64 owners can blast away with their own version.

The plot and game style remain the same. For those who haven't seen it I shall recite from the holy oracle known as the in-lay. As a little sprog you always wanted to be a pilot, so when you grew into a bigger sprog you joined the academy, became an ace pilot, and consequently ended up being sent on a dangerous mission. The basic objective behind all this bumf is to protect the generators which reside at the bottom of each screen. This is initially quite easy as the aliens haven't yet decided to attack, but like all good alien mercenaries from beyond the stars they materialise and start pulverising you, your generators and just about anything else.

At this point you don't really have time to take in the graphics or sound so let me babble on a bit. The graphics are really smart, a very faithful 8-bit representation of the 16-bit original. The parallax scrolling is there, and it looks absolutely fantastic at high speeds though sadly at slow speeds it becomes jerky. Shame on you Logotron.

Star Ray scrolls horizontally and is not dissimilar to *Defender*, though being a post modern shoot 'em up it has to have collectable features, which come in the form of lettered pods; A gives you improved acceleration, V higher top speed, T rapid fire and so on down the list.

So far so good, but what weakens the game is a shortage of playability. It's impossible to whizz forward with guns blazing carving a path through the alien ranks. You just seem to collide with everything else. To blast them you need to slow down and carefully line yourself up to fire. So that cuts down the pulse racing action. I must say I'm very disappointed, it looks like the programmers went all out on visual accuracy and left themselves with very little room for anything else. Not that I want to be too hard on *StarRay*, it is a hard job converting from a machine as powerful as the Amiga and then making a presentable representation on the 64.

More varied than say *Dropzone*, *Star Ray* cannot match the old classic *Defender* clones for action.

Mark Patterson



A rumble in the jungle.

SOUND	81%
GRAPHICS	75%
LASTABILITY	56%
PLAYABILITY	64%

60%

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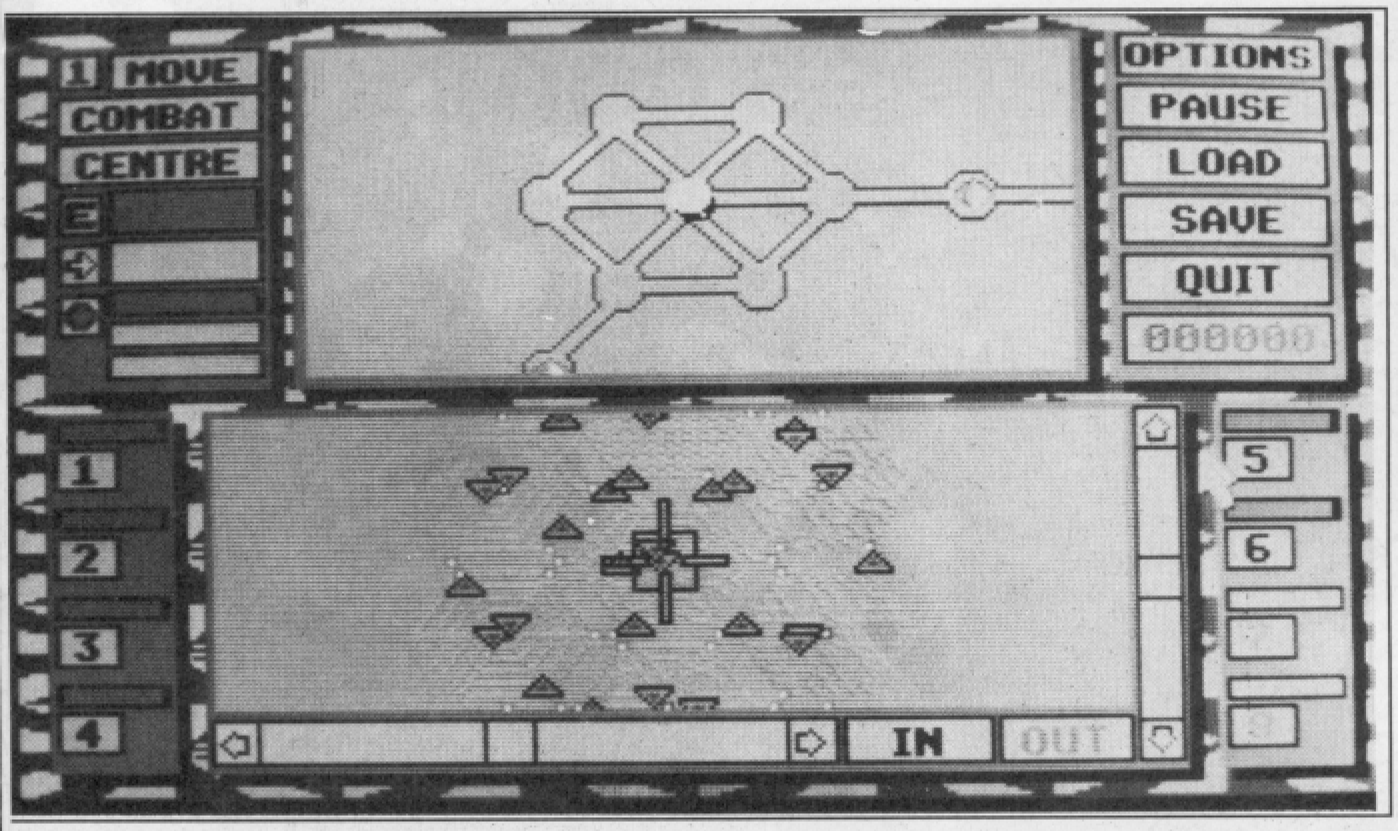
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Checking out the enemy.

TRACKER

In the future, it seems no-one will want to play word games or test their general knowledge on TV quiz games, instead they'll want blood. *Tracker*, like Arnie's recent film 'The Running Man', is a futuristic gameshow where the winner stays alive.

The aim behind the game is the neutralize the correct rooms inside a large mazelike network of tunnels. You fly a posse of six skimmer-like planes that have to zip up and down the passages in search of intersections which conceal pods that need to be shot to make the area safe.

You are not alone inside the world of bland, twisting, turning tunnels and random polygon explosions. A map can be called up at any time showing the locations of all the pods and all the enemy ships. Enemy ships race everywhere with the intent of shooting you down.

The tunnels are viewed as hidden-line perspective view vectors, and all the objects in the game (ships, pods, bullets) are filled vectors, as in many of the recent Rainbird products (*Starglider 2, Carrier Command*). Why the tunnels aren't filled is a mystery — possibly it was done for the sake of speed, but if so, it hasn't done the job. The game is still, unfortunately, very slow at times, especially when the enemy are on screen.

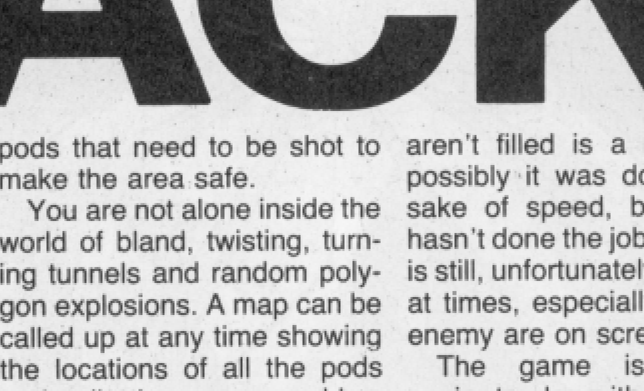
The game is definitely easier to play with the mouse, but even so, practice is still needed if you don't want to go careering off every bend you come across. Controls are fairly simple. Just point the plane in the direction you want to fly and press down on the accelerator. Even so, it can be very hard to get round some of the s-bends.

Funnily enough despite *Tracker*'s lack of speed, it's amazingly absorbing. First impressions of the game aren't so hot, but within 15 minutes of sitting down you'll be embroiled in a sweat-inducing dogfight through the twisting tunnels with an alien, which, believe me, will enable you to forget many of the game's flaws. You'll be far too busy trying to get to the next pod without being shot down by the aliens which tail you and match your every move.

Tracker is really very good. It takes an effort to get into, but once you do, you won't be disappointed. It isn't in the same league as *Carrier Command* or *Starglider II*, but then again few games are.

Tony Dillon

Rainbird
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Don't shoot! It's friendly!

SOUND	**71%**
GRAPHICS	**73%**
LASTABILITY	**87%**
PLAYABILITY	**78%**

79%

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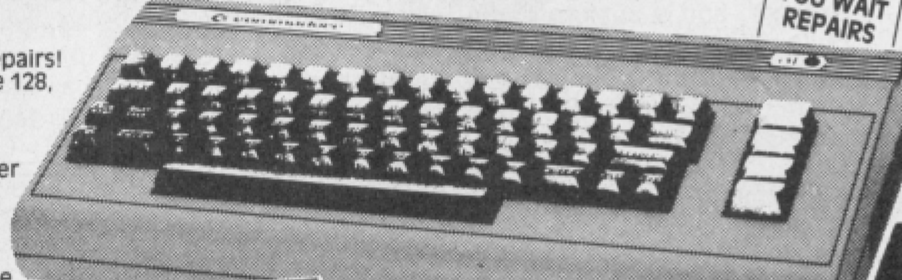
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RACK'EM

Wow, have we got a game here? (Three-ball in middle right.) *Rack 'Em* is not just a pool game (six-ball in bottom with double rebound clipping nine-ball into middle right. Game over — rack 'em up and get me an ice cold sasparilla).

Rack 'em is basically a pool game which gives you the three most popular versions of the game: straight pool, eight-ball and nine-ball pool. On top of that it throws in snooker, a set of ten trick shots you can execute, and a custom game option that lets you invent and set up any game you like. Just to make things even more impressive, you can save any shot you like and replay it. Now that's what I call value.

Don't worry if you don't know the rules of the pool games because they're all explained at the back of the manual. And the program is designed in such a way that you can't go far wrong — or cheat.

The play screen looks like most snooker-type games, with an overhead view of the complete table. At the bottom, there's a text area with two supposed 'commentators' on either side of the screen, whose job is to talk you through the play, telling you whose turn it is and guiding you through the process of calling and making shots. It's all very simple and very well done.

So how do you make a shot? There's a set sequence depending on which game you play. If it's a pool game in which you have to nominate a ball and a pocket, you use the joystick to highlight a ball. You then choose the pocket, again with the joystick.

Then you set the direction of shot, which is a slightly different process depending on whether you chose the 'amateur' or 'professional' level of difficulty. In both cases, you see two ghost balls. The first is next to your target ball and it determines where on the ball the cueball will strike. The second ghost ball shows the direction the target ball will take when hit.

Now it's on to actually hitting the ball. First you decide where on the cueball you want the cue to strike to make it spin. Then you can set the power of shot: a power meter shows a cue going backwards and forwards from a cueball. To get the greatest accuracy you must press the firebutton in that split second when the cue touches the cueball. It's crucial to master this or you'll mess up every shot.

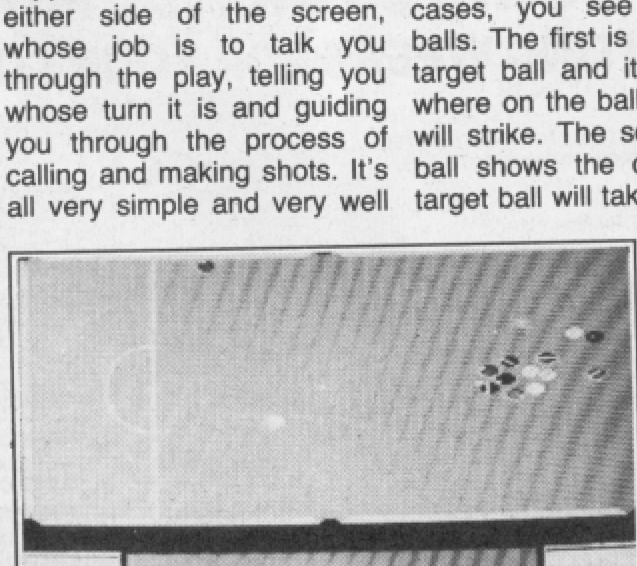
The whole process may sound laborious and time-consuming but with a little practice you can get through it quite quickly.

The test of any good pool or snooker game is how accurate and how realistic it is. My opinion is that *Rack 'em* is one of the best I've seen. If you set the shot up correctly and press the joystick at exactly the right time you simply know it's going to go in. As far as realism goes, the angles, rebounds, length of travel all look about right to me. You can actually see the spots and stripes spin as the balls roll, and there's a nice authentic 'clunk' sound when the balls strike.

There's lots more I could say about *Rack 'em* because it offers so much. But I'll cut it short so that I can get back to the table. It's simply an excellent rendition of a much converted sport.

Bohdan Buciak

Electronic Arts
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Who let Scrivo on the table?

SOUND	**55%**
GRAPHICS	**70%**
LASTABILITY	**75%**
PLAYABILITY	**82%**

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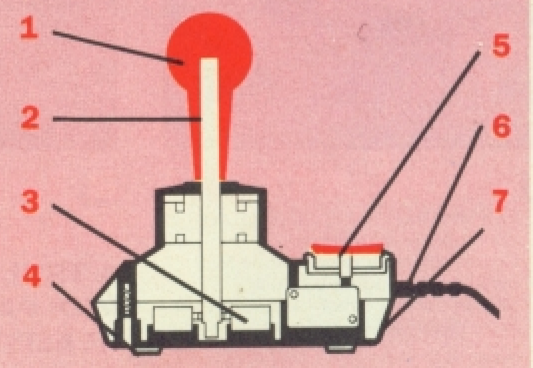
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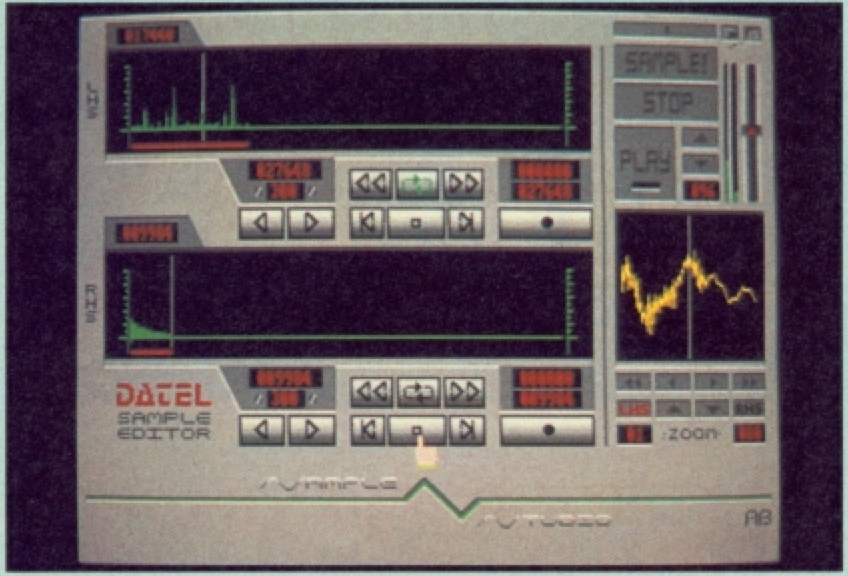
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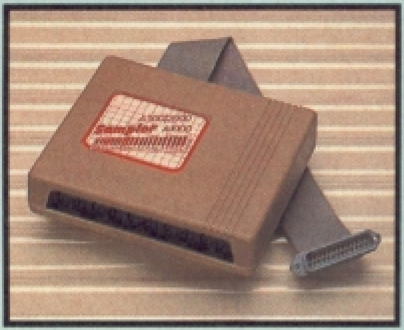
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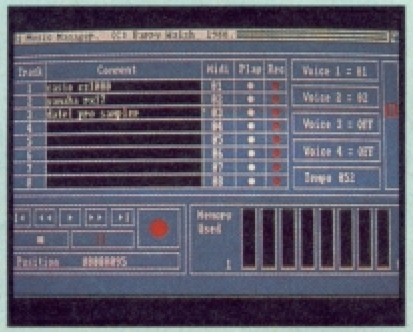
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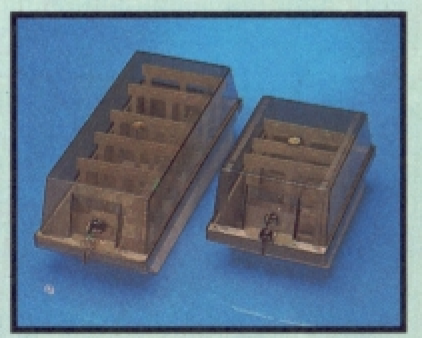
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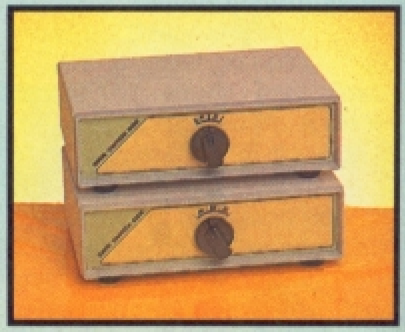
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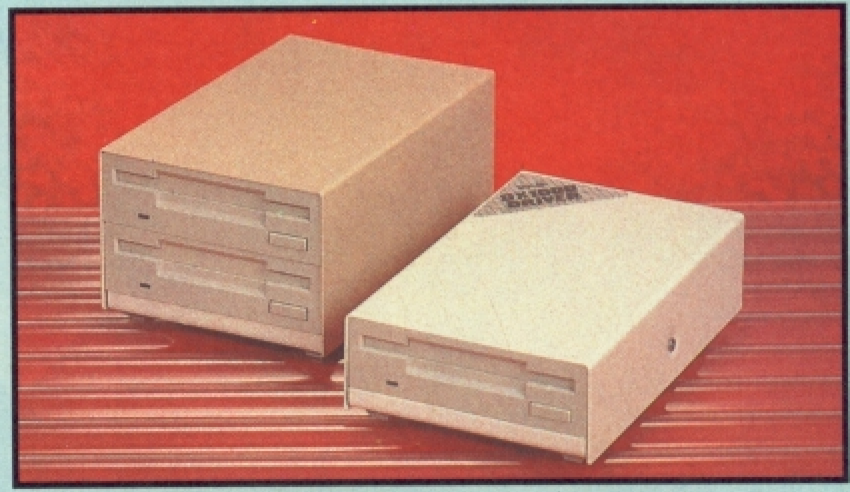
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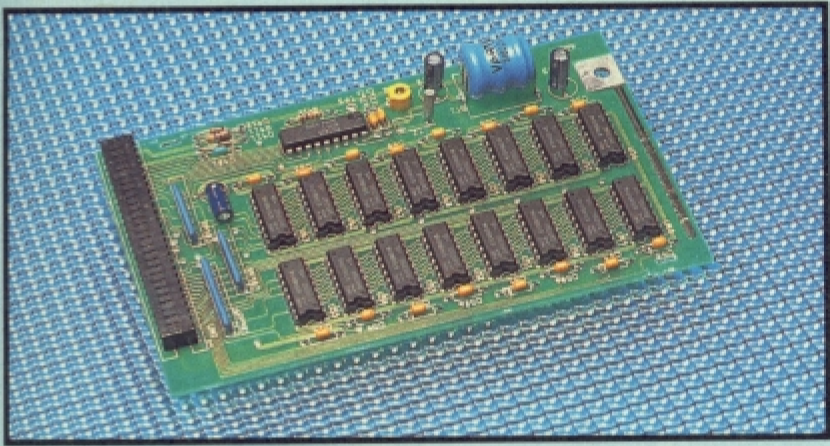
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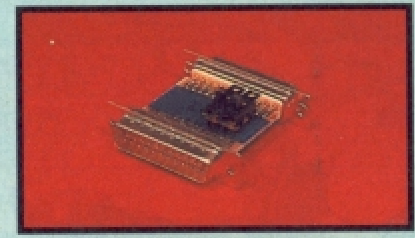
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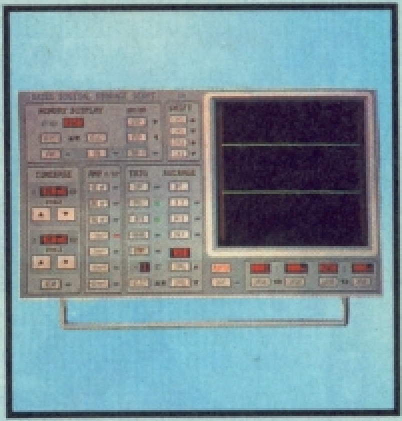
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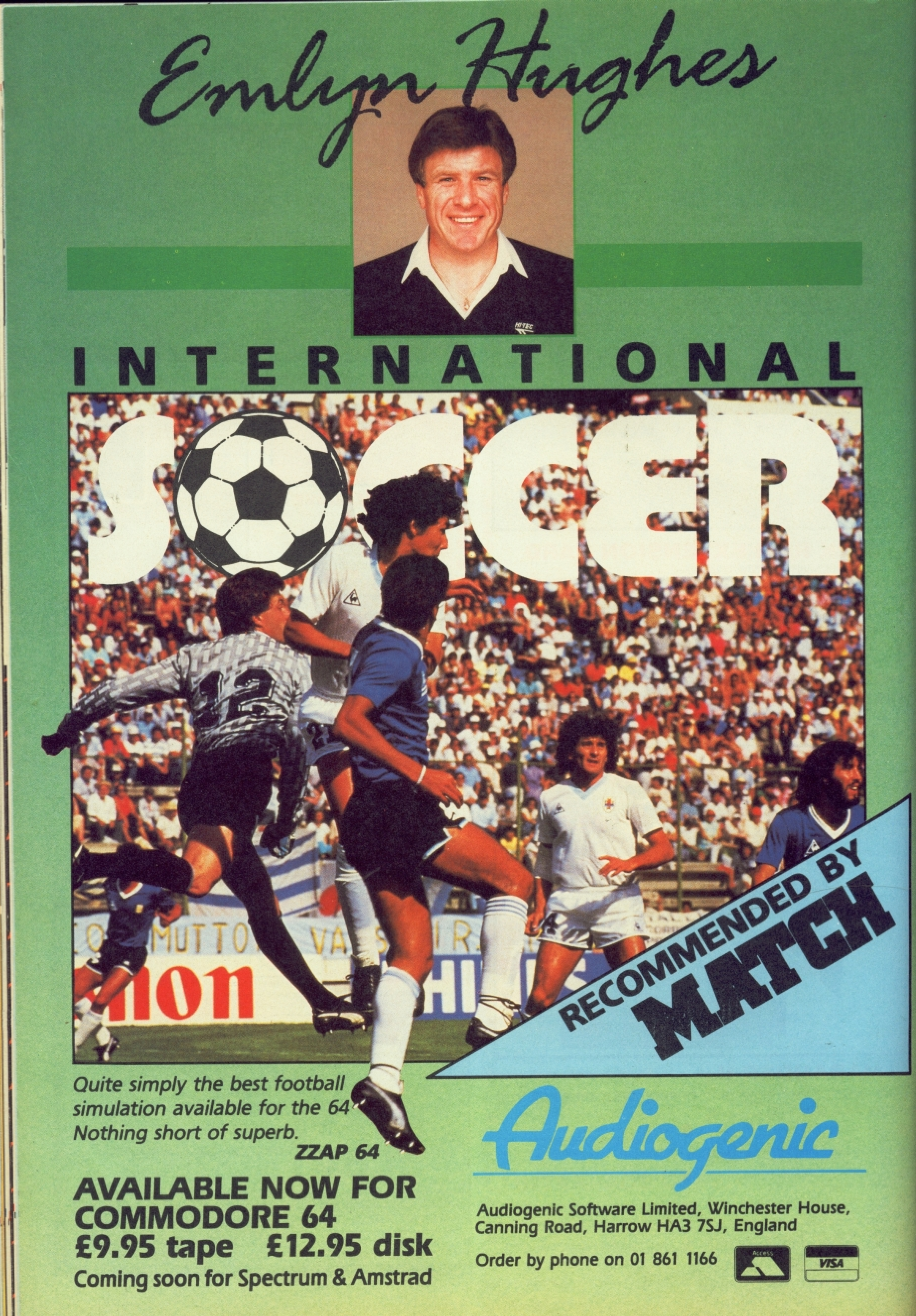
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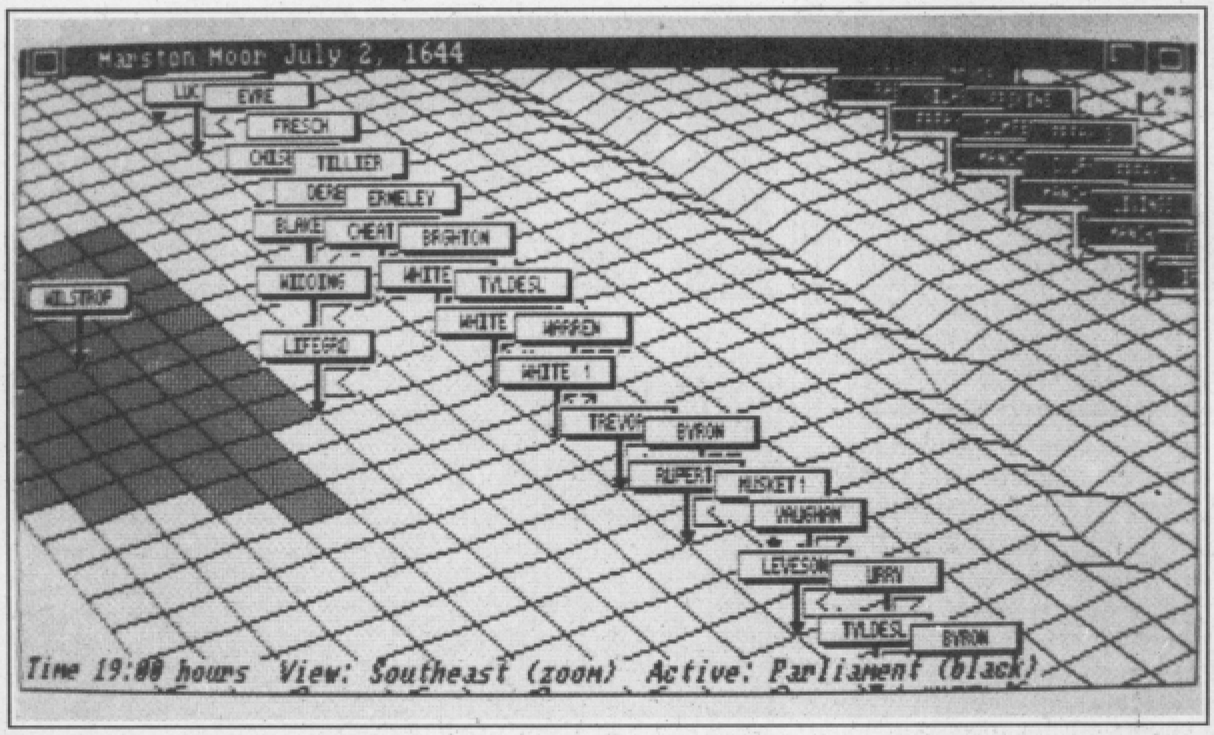
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Yankees and Confederates slog it out (. . . er . . . on Marston moor? — Ed)

U.M.S

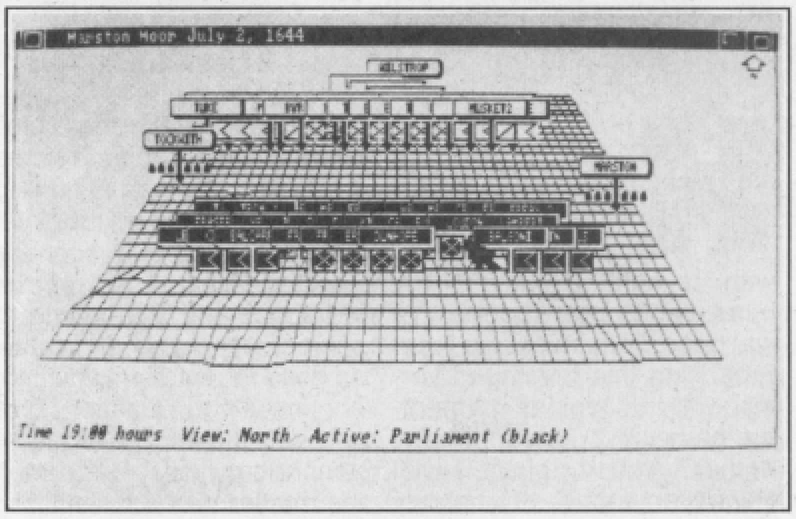
Universal Military Simulator (as it's known in the trade) takes a giant leap away from the traditional boardgame style wargames, and adds a third dimension to the proceedings giving a new feeling of depth and realism to the simulation.

The map can be viewed from any of eight different compass directions. These are there to help you view the battle from a clear viewpoint. After all, you wouldn't want to miss all the action because it happens between two mountains.

The map is fully landscaped with moutains, hills, valleys and trees, as well as cities, towns and landmarks. The different forms of terrain affect how the battle goes greatly. A unit of footsoldiers is going to move a lot more slowly going up a hill than they are when travelling across a plain. The sames goes for forests.

The game is controlled via a menu bar at the top of the screen and a pointer. From the menu you can choose your viewpoint, zoom range (normal for a full overview of the war, zoom for a medium close-up of an area, and extreme zoom for an exact picture of individual battles), give orders to your units, select ranged attack, swap sides, and even alter screen colours. Almost anything, in fact.

As well as a selection of pre-designed scenarios that come with the game, you can design your own scenarios. The game designer is held on a separate disk, and it's a good idea to make a backup of the original, as you have to do a lot of saving out.



Into the valley . . .

To create a scenario, you have to do three things, most important of which is creating a map. To do this, you highlight an area on the map that you want to alter, and then select what you want to put in it. You have a wide choice from small hills to large mountains and forests. You can even put in a town or two. Once you have the map you want, you save it out and then put together your army.

You are presented with a large group of tiles, each depicting a different type of unit, and you must first select which type of unit you want. You can then enter all the relevant details, such as title of group, speed, strength and overall efficiency.

UMS is a highly comprehensive package, with a lot in it to be implemented. That said, it's still remarkably easy to pick up, and in no time at all, you'll be creeping through the jungles of Vietnam, the barren wastes of Bognor Regis, or merely trying to get into the office and come up with a feasible excuse as to why you haven't done your work.

Tony Dillon

C64 update

Rainbird promise faithfully that, believe it or not, a C64 version will appear sometime next year, so all you 8-bit owners, don't despair.

Rainbird
Price: £19.99

SOUND	65%
GRAPHICS	86%
LASTABILITY	79%
PLAYABILITY	85%

80%



RISK

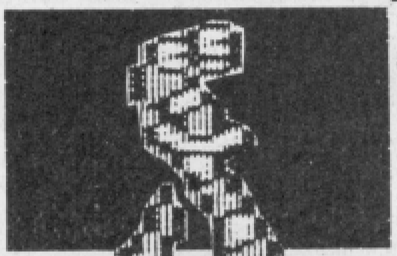
Leisure Genius
Price:
£14.95 cass
£19.95 disk

Risk is one of those epic board games that you start, with the best of intentions, at around half past eight and end up finishing, if at all, in the early hours of the morning. Somewhere along the line, the quiet, polite people who have been your friends for years turn into jealous, sadistic, power crazy lunatics.

It says here that *Risk* is a classic game of strategy, quite right too. To take a look at the rule book you'd think it was dead complicated, though it's really quite straightforward. Up to six players take part on a board which represents a map of the world with 42 countries. Each player controls an army and takes it in turn to mobilise troops, attack opponents and gain territory according to a strict set of rules and two sets of dice.

To begin with, the players are allocated a number of armies. Each player takes it in turn to place armies on a country, hence occupying it. When all the countries are occupied the remaining armies are positioned. Player one (let's say red) must then decide who, if anyone to attack. Say there are three red armies on Brazil and two yellow ones on Argentina. Red might roll three dice to attack with three armies and Yellow would roll two to put up the maximum defence. If red scores higher on two dice than yellow, he gains the country.

So there's obviously a bit of luck involved, but strategy



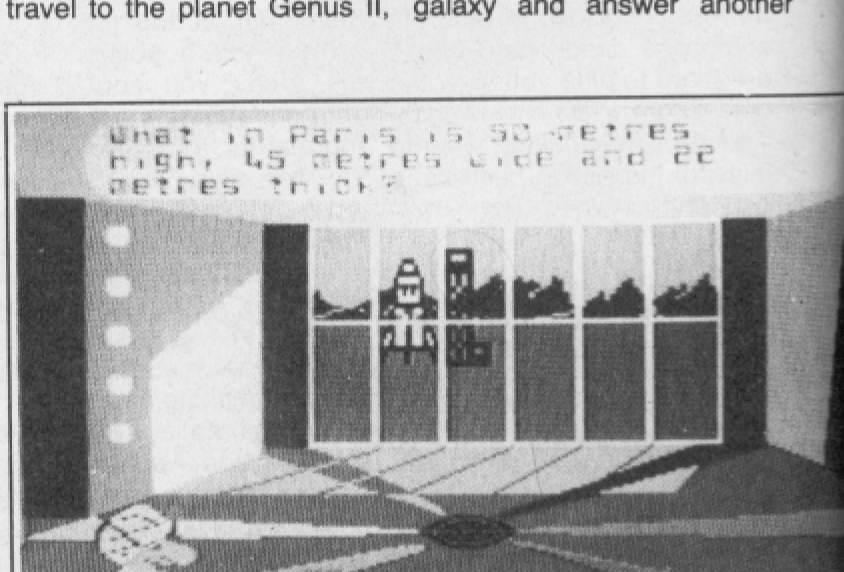
TRIVIAL

Here's a trivial tip for Arctic explorers: a polar bear is more likely to hit you with its left paw than with its right. Groan. To my mind a polar bear should have walloped Domark to stop them producing this revamped version of its original game-of-the-game. I mean, why bother? Nobody plays Trivial Pursuit anymore — or nobody admits to playing it.

This new version does away with some of the trivia (the board, the cheeses, the dice) and replces them with something even more trivial — a hurriedly thought out intergalatic space travel scenario. The questions, though, haven't changed. The same six subject categories remain and so does the rule that you carry on answering questions until you get one wrong. Up to six people can play — the more the nastier.

Now for the space travel stuff. All players start on earth and must answer the first question correctly in order to get into the rocket and blast off into space. Once in space your ship must visit six galaxies; an object must be found in each one before you're able to travel to the planet Genus II, your final destination.

Once in a galaxy you choose a planet to land on. The native of that planet then asks you a question chosen at random from one of the six subjects. If you get it right, you pick another planet in that galaxy and answer another



Domark
Price
£14.95 cass
£19.95 disk

AMIGA

AMIGA	£19.95

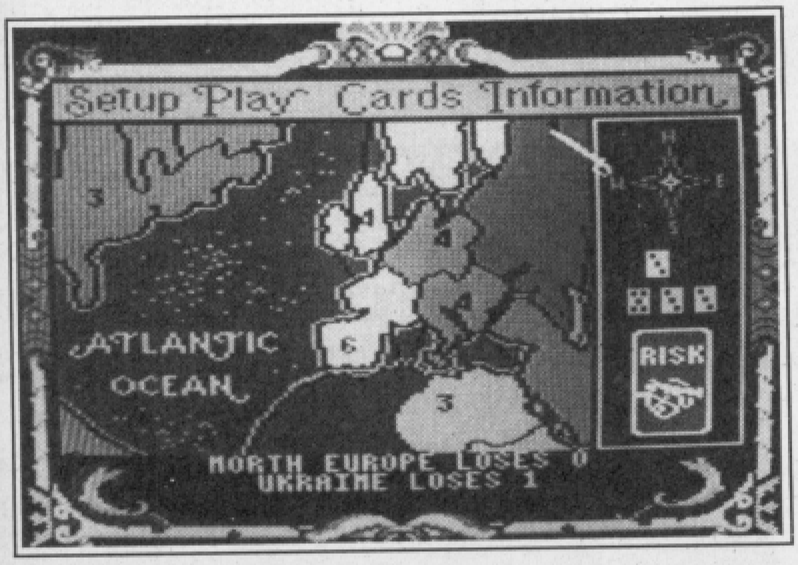
Amiga *Pursuits* is almost as trivial as the 64 version. The graphics are slightly better defined, though the styles and routines remain the same. The questions are the same, the planets, and the features. Even the sound fails to inspire. Not so much a new beginning, more hopefully a final ending.

plays a big part too. When, who and how often to attack, when to trade in card sets for extra armies (the longer you leave it the more you get) and when to sign a peace treaty with the person who controls Europe are all thorny problems.

Computer *Risk* overcomes several drawbacks of the board game, like losing the little plastic armies under the settee, and having to throw the dice being just a few.

To give it its due though, computer *Risk* is an excellent and comprehensive implementation of the board game. The 'board' or map is beautifully drawn and fairly faithful to the original.

There are more customisation options than you can shake a stick at. One of the more useful ones includes automatic random allocation of territories and placing of armies, which, if you had to do it manually, would take forever.



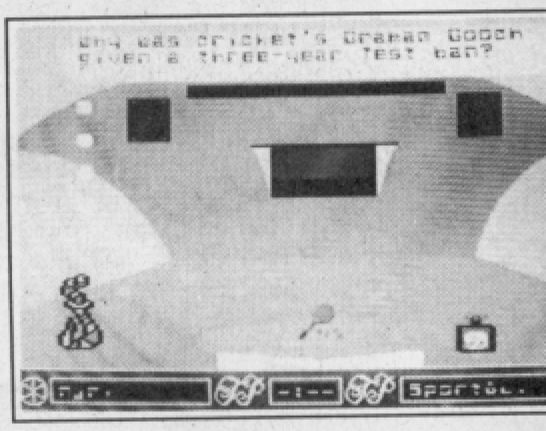
I suppose the acid test is whether playing computer risk is any more enjoyable than the real thing. The computer is excellent at keeping track of positions, a league table of battle performance, dishing out bonus armies and remembering whose go it is. The biggest drawback though is that like *Espionage* you can't see the whole board at one go, but have to scroll around. That's probably not so much of a problem if you're new to the game, but I like to get a global view of the action. The one big advantage of *Risk*, like all computer adaptations of board games, is that you're never stuck for someone to play with.

Ken McMahon

SOUND	n/a
GRAPHICS	70%
LASTABILITY	70%
PLAYABILITY	65%

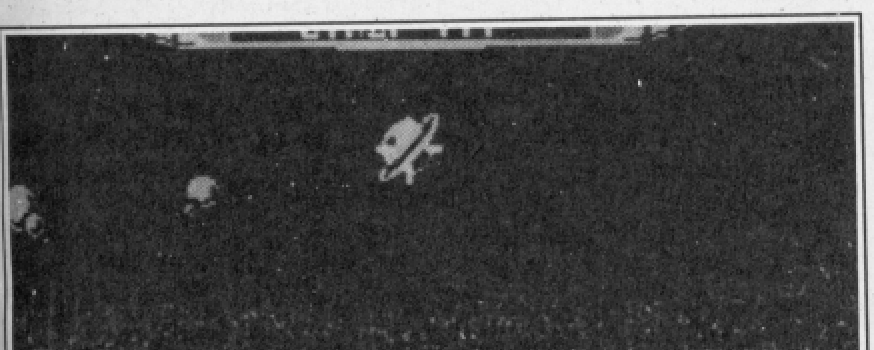
68%

PURSUIT



question until you find the necessary object. Answer that correctly and you go into hyperspace and travel to the next galaxy. An incorrect answer passes the game to your opponent.

Once all six objects have been collected, you travel to the planet Genus II where a team of elders ask you even more questions. Trouble is, only one of them has the ace question up his sleeve, so you must carry on choosing and answering questions until you get the one that wins you the game.



So why should this lot be better than playing the board game? Graphically, I suppose, it's more interesting. The players and the planets' inhabitants are all 'cute' little charcaters. You get to fly around a little in the spaceship, choosing which planet to land on, and there's information to be had on what questions you got right and wrong. But the graphics are nothing special. Most of the planets look alike and the view through the spaceship window isn't exactly stunning.

One plus for the computer game is the wider scope for questions. In some of them you hear snippets of music, and in others you're asked to identify an object or a picture — you couldn't do that with the original.

To its credit, the game is well programmed and works smoothly enough. It's very simple to operate and lets you get going immediately without having to read too many instructions.

Domark did very well with its first *Trivial Pursuit* game because it coincided with the trivia mania. What actually made it a mania in the first place is anybody's guess — it's like trying to divine how Rick Astley became a pop star. Anyway, trvia is dead, trivia is boring. In short, it's dead boring.

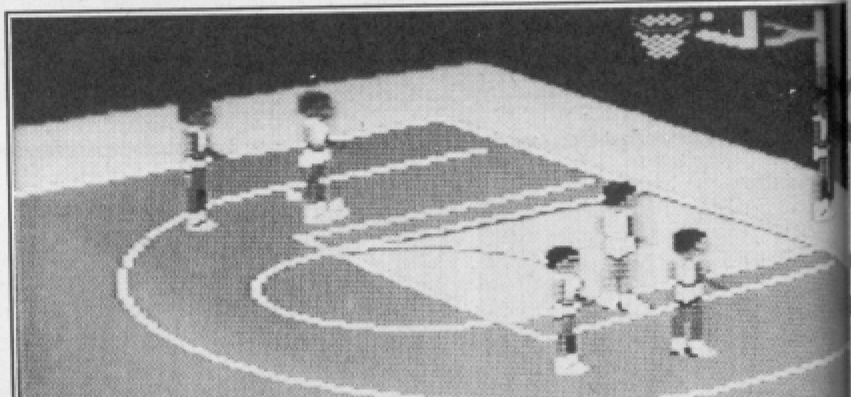
Bohdan Buciak

SOUND	40%
GRAPHICS	53%
LASTABILITY	35%
PLAYABILITY	65%

51%

FAST BREAK

Make your play.



You could write everything I know about basketball on a bitesize Mars bar wrapper. But having played *Fast Break*, I reckon I could make a mess of coaching the Harlem Globetrotters.

The reason for this is that *Fast Break* panders to that American obsession with 'plays', general strategies and player statistics. Without all this basketball would simply be netball for tall people with arms like drainpipes.

Fast Break looks to me like being a cut above the average basketball sim. The programmers have made the incredible discovery that in reality basketball is quite fast, so they've made the game live up to its name and delivered action that's sometimes so quick that you wonder what's going on. Admittedly this only happens when the computer is in control of a team but it's still very impressive. The two teams in question are the Slammers and the Jammers. You can be either team playing against the computer or choose the two-player option. Unlike the real game, this version is three-a-side and before you start, you must choose three from the squad of six players at your disposal.

You also get figures on field goals attempted/gained, personal fouls, steals and turnovers (giving the ball to the other side when you shouldn't).

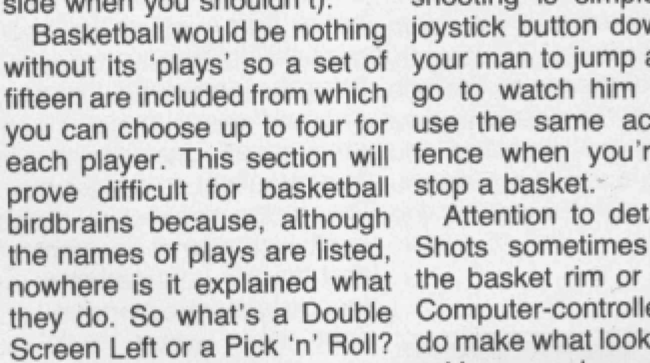
Basketball would be nothing without its 'plays' so a set of fifteen are included from which you can choose up to four for each player. This section will prove difficult for basketball birdbrains because, although the names of plays are listed, nowhere is it explained what they do. So what's a Double Screen Left or a Pick 'n' Roll? (*The last one's about nasal excavation — Ed.)*

Now for the actual gameplay. It is good, although very biased to the computer if you choose that option. Movement is slick, passing fast, and shooting is simple: hold the joystick button down, wait for your man to jump and then let go to watch him shoot. You use the same action in defence when you're trying to stop a basket.

Attention to detail is good. Shots sometimes roll round the basket rim or bounce off. Computer-controlled players do make what look like 'plays'.

You can also use the plays you selected during the match. Dribble the ball into the opponents' half, turn back to the centre and play freezes. A display of that man's possible plays appears with an arrow direction for each one. Push the joystick in the direction of the arrow for that play and you activate it. Since I never knew what the plays were supposed to do, I couldn't tell whether they succeeded or not. This also rather interferes with the flow of the game as you can imagine.

Fast Break deserves to be among the best of the batch of basketball sims so far but it is aimed at a small group of punters who understand the game and enjoy its technicalities. Whether the world needs another basketball sim I don't know. **Bohdan Buciak**



Electronic Arts
Price:
£9.95 cass
£14.95 disk

SOUND	**35%**
GRAPHICS	**69%**
LASTABILITY	**65%**
PLAYABILITY	**65%**

68%



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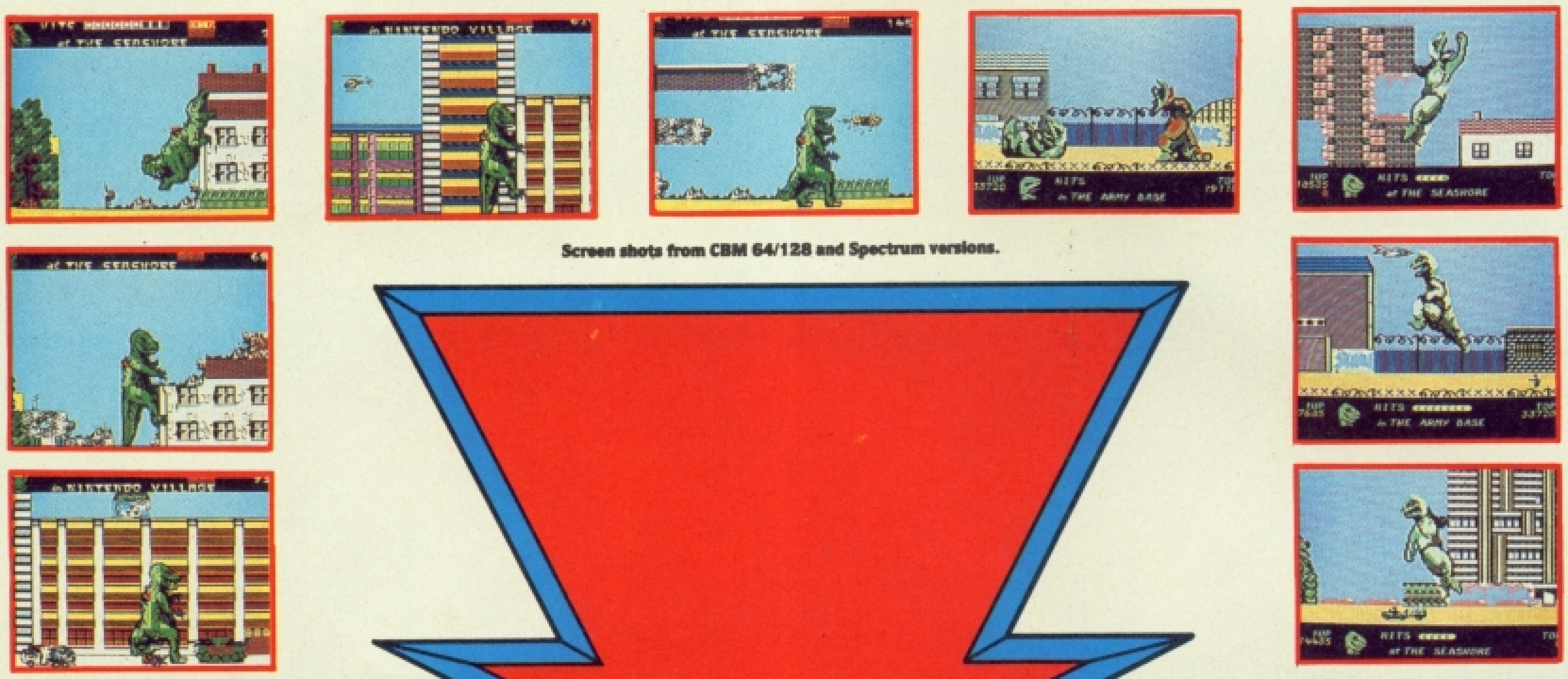

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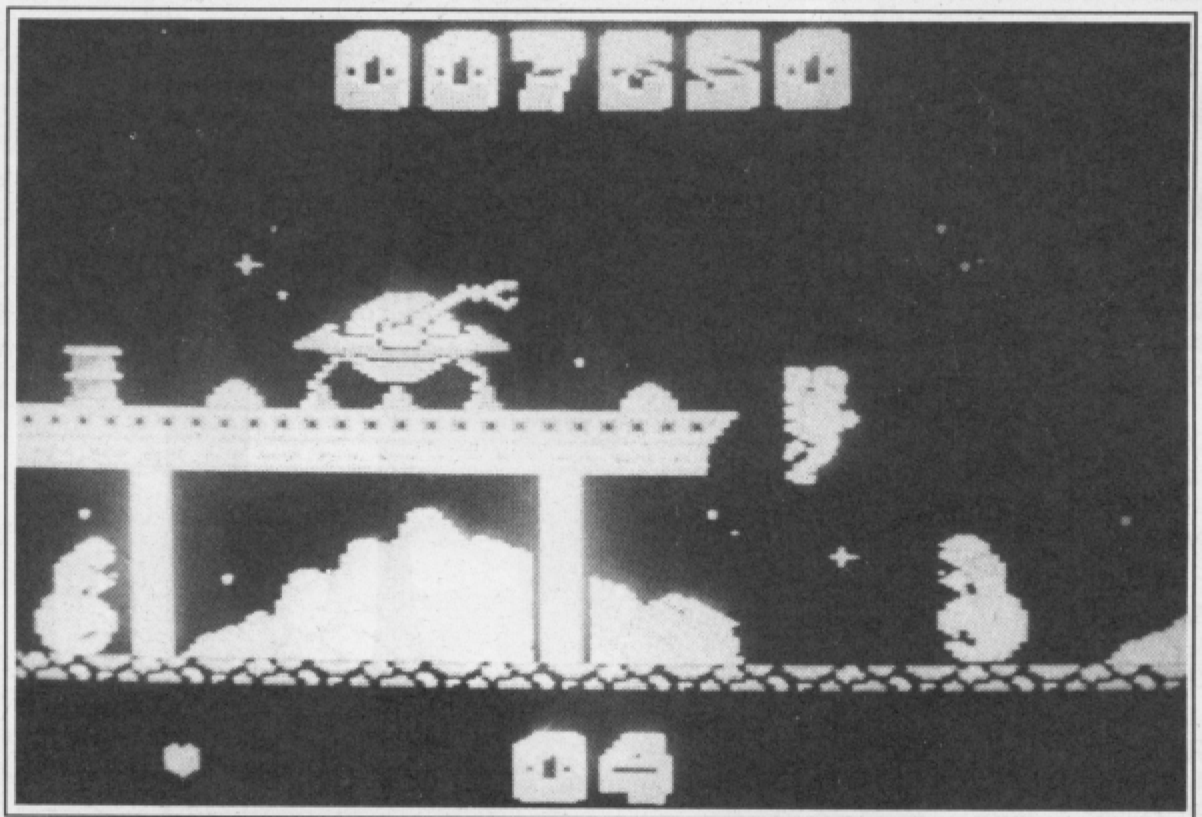
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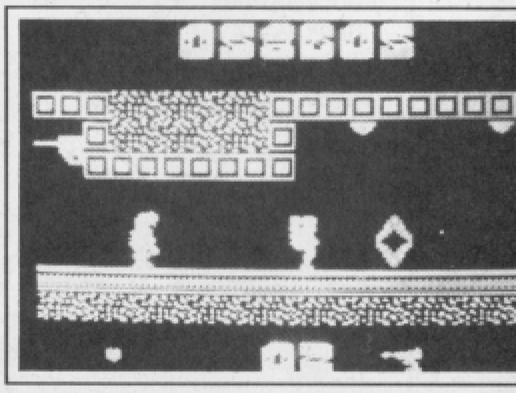


Screen shots from CBM 64/128 and Spectrum versions.



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GAME OVER 2

The *Game Over* plot featured two characters, an evil empress Gremla and her 'faithful' lieutentant Arkos who turned against her and resolved to destroy her empire. None of this had the remotest connection with the game of course, but was simply an excuse to put a picture of a woman with an unnaturally large chest on the packaging.

In *Game Over II* Arkos is captured by Gremla's Heirs and must be rescued by the intrepid Major Locke. If the packaging is anything to go by Major Locke had better watch out. Gremla's heirs have breasts the size of basketballs — if the next generation ever sees the light of day there won't be room on the planet for much else.

Game Over II loads in two parts; before you get to play the second instalment you have to complete the first and obtain a pass code. This is a bit of shame really because the second half of the game is a lot more fun and a lot less difficult than the first.

There are four phases to section one. In Phase one you must approach Moon 4 (this could get confusing). It's not a new idea, your ship is situated on the left of screen, alien thingies enter screen right, you shoot them. Occasionally you miss and they collide with you. Bonus lives every x thousand points and so on. A bit boring this, but its worth perservering 'cause things improve.

Phase two and three: You fly over the volcanic area and enter the underground cavern. Same as before, but with pretty jazzy backgrounds, missiles, balls of fire, serpents and nebulae of Krypton gas. In phase 4 you dump the ship and cross the swamp, fighting off all manner of ugly beasties with your photonic blade.

Once you've done all that, which shouldn't take you more than a day or two, (an autofire joystick is a big help) you can have a bash at section two which is a flip screen maze type thing in which you have to find certain objects and kill certain things. This time you're on foot and must jump over the Pelotrones, which look like bouncing peas, only more menacing, and find your ionic turbo laser. No prizes for guessing what you do with it.

Next you take a walk through the underground forest in search of the access medallion which opens a gate and lets you into the next phase. If this sounds like a bit of a stroll, well I can tell you it isn't. All the time things, usually owls, materialise and come after you. This is in addition to the walking aliens which look a bit like monks. Pretty funny collection of aliens if you ask me. Anyway, when they bump into you you lose a hefty dose of life force as signified by the diminishing size of your beating heart at the bottom of the screen. You have four hearts in reserve at the beginning of section one and extra ones can be found lying around the section two maze.

Next it's through the door and across a Plentosaurus and Piranha inhabited lake — time your jumps carefully, then the short helicopter ride to the magma level where giant blocks of magma which look remarkably like pineapple husks fall on your head unless you manage to avoid them. Then it's simply a question of disintegrating all the red devils guarding the prison and that's it — game over.

If you didn't get *Game Over* when it came out, it comes free in this special double pack which goes some way to compensate for the unoriginal gameplay. **Ken McMahon**

Dynamic
Price:
£8.95 cass
£12.95 disk

SOUND	52%
GRAPHICS	62%
LASTABILITY	58%
PLAYABILITY	56%

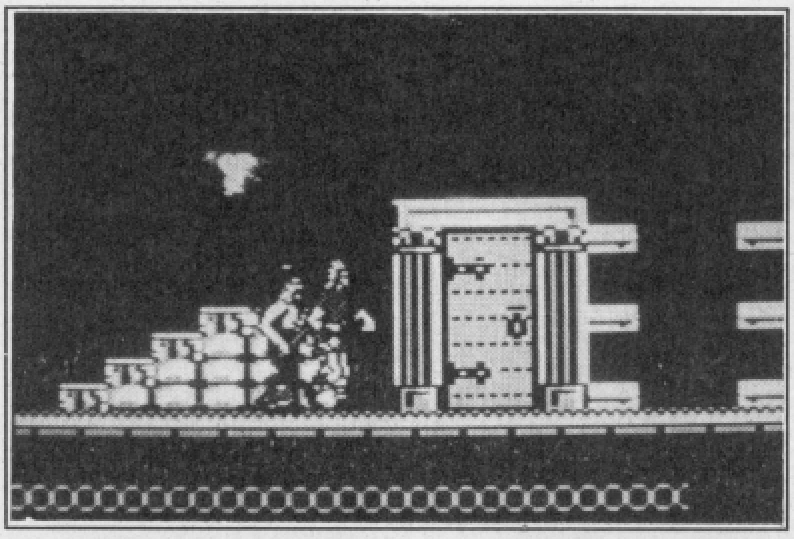
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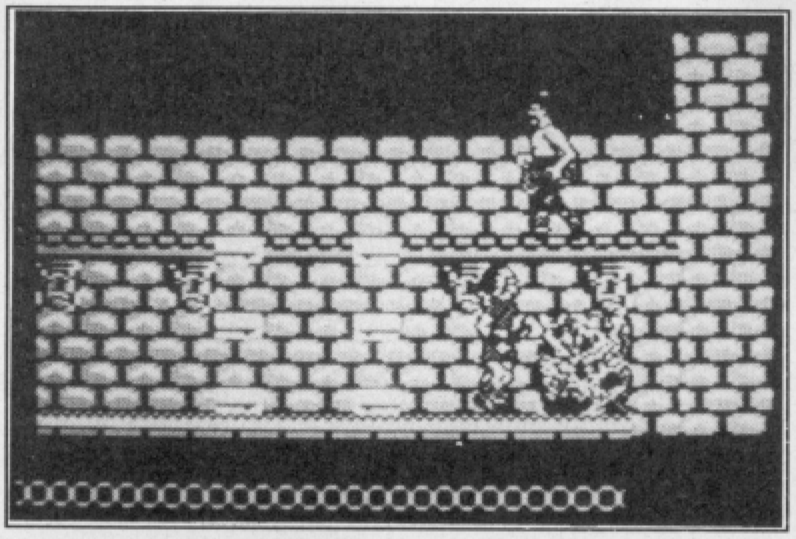
ADVERTISMENT INDEX

CU AMIGA - 64

ARTURA

Lots of funny names (*like yours? — Ed*) to get to grips with in this game. You are none other than *Artura*. Your quest is to find Nimue, apprentice of Merdyn the Mage, who's been captured by Morgause your evil half-sister. Let's face it, when you're in the ancient kingdom of Albion, Stan and Doris just won't do.





Even more difficult to grasp is the storyline which involves you wandering around Morgause's Dun (what's a dun?) to rescue Nimue. Whilst you're doing this, you're supposed to collect various Rune stones which, the blurb says, will let you use the mystical wheel of Cerridwen to return home on — so it's really all about finding the Celtic equivalent of a buspass.

Anyway, no mystic Runes for guessing that this is a wander around the levels game. It looks pretty ordinary too: loads of brick walls, chunky wooden doors to take you up and stairwells to go down. The upper levels are outdoors (trees, shrubs, a few birds flying around) whilst the lower levels are obviously dungeons (spiders, rats etc).

In traditional style, Runestones are identified by the 'R' that's on them. Some of them are placed in particularly nasty places, like the other side of a pit that you'll never get out of if you fall in.

Apart from the well worn programming, the game's got few things going for it, particularly in the graphics department. The sprites are large but they're hardly well detailed. *Artura* himself is big, and has a plumed helmet that bobs up and down — not the helmet, the plume. His main weapon is a seemingly inexhaustable supply of axes. Whenever he throws one, it spins through the air, hitting the ground a few lengths in front of him. The backgrounds too are a little on the sparse side, whilst the animation is poor with lots of bouncing sprites.

But best of all are the rats. Don't get me wrong, I don't like rats. Jimmy Cagney was right, they're dirty. But these rats are the size of dogs and they scuttle around the lower floors. They waggle their noses, sit up on their hind legs and generally snap at your ankles as you go past. A flying axe will put paid to one of these but it must land squarely on its head.

Not surprisingly, you have a finite supply of energy which goes down a little on every contact with a nasty. Even the swooping birds on upper levels drain your supply. Energy replenishing fruit is to be found here and there — but not enough as far as I'm concerned.

I must admit to being a little confused by the runes. Whenever you find one, its icon appears at the bottom of the screen. You're supposedly able to activate a rune by going into rune mode. Well, I haven't and it may be that you need to find all of them before something suitably magic happens. Better wait and see. What's annoying about all this are the minimal instructions. You know what I mean, the "find out for yourself" approach.

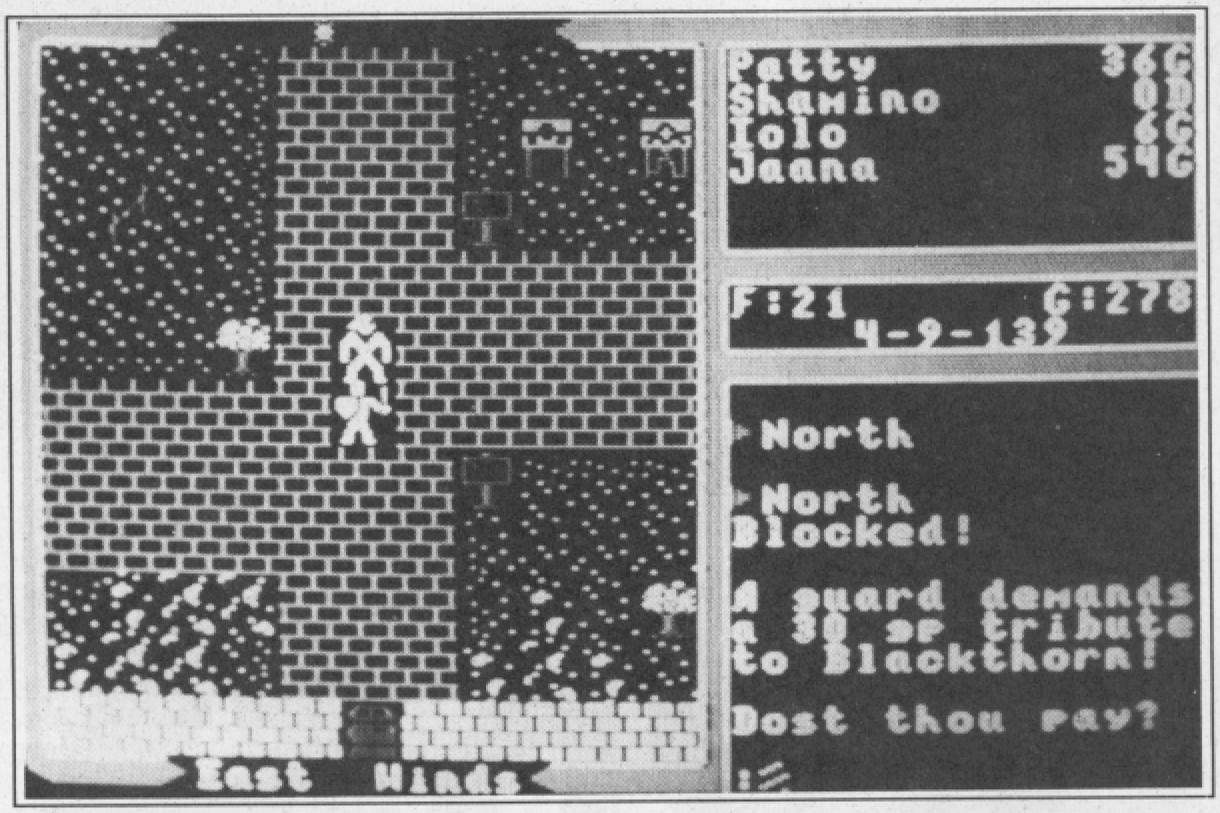
Artura is a rather ordinary game dressed up with a few frills. It's a must for axe throwing rat lovers everywhere, but others should approach with care.

Bohdan Buciak

Gremlin Graphics
Price:
£9.99 cass
£14.99 disk

SOUND	**40%**
GRAPHICS	**60%**
LASTABILITY	**45%**
PLAYABILITY	**53%**

48%



Go on, Iolo. Get stuck in!

ULTIMA V

Many a moon hath passed since the advent of the fourth tome in the *Ultima* series. And now dawns the day of the long awaited *Ultima V*, and well worth the wait it be.

It begins where *Ultima IV* ended. Mysteriously, Lord British (ruler of the realm where the game is set) has disappered and all contact with his companions has been lost. In a desperate call to arms you have been summoned to find Lord British and to defeat the evil forces which now inhabit the land.

Unlike other role playing games you do not have the choice of what character you want to play, you are automatically endowed with an Avatar (a magic user/warrior) whose status is determined by a series of eight questions at the start of the game.

The first worrying thing I noticed about this game was that it came on four double-sided disks, though thankfully there is no need to make a character disk. More important even than the huge number of disks is their access speed, which is phenomenally slow, and proves to be *Ultima*'s only real stumbling block.

The graphics have been tarted up slightly, giving you recognisable characters and extra animation. *Ultima V* also still manages to retain the neat concise style that has always been a feature of the series. The people themselves are fantastic, everybody you meet can be directly communicated with and have their own genuine reactions when you question them. Believe me this enhances the game no end.

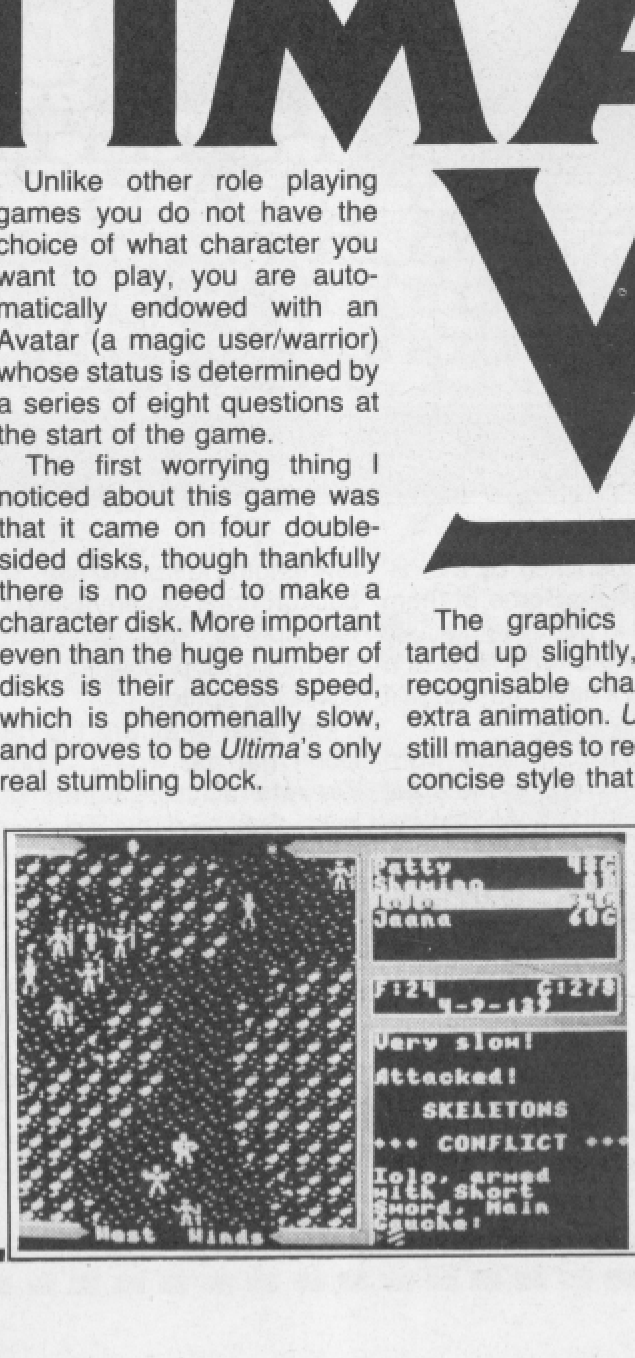
Ultima V epitomises the true sense of computer role play. You start off with a few companions and basic equipment, and then the rest is down to you. Ask questions, explore and generally do anything you think might help the situation.

The potential for creative thinking is well-nigh limitless. Ships, canoes, horses and more are there at a price. As well as a variety of shops, towns, villages, and people. In fact I could go on for ages — and so can the game. One word of warning: *Ultima V* caters for the experienced RPGer. It took me a fair while to get into it but once you're going it is very hard to drag yourself away.

Ultima V comes in a very nicely presented package with a bound book, lots of very interesting and helpful reference sheets, a silver (well that's what they say) pentagram and a map printed on cloth, which can be used as a refrence aid, handerchief, handy tea towel or an acid house bandana.

Mark Patterson

Origin
Price: £24.95
(disk only)



Oh, tell him to get lost!

GRAPHICS	40%
SOUND	25%
PLAYABILITY	80%
LASTABILITY	86%

86%


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VICTORY
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McKnight to the rescue!

EMLYN HUGHES' INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

It doesn't seem too long ago that I found myself praising *International Soccer* as the hip and trendy footy game on the 64. Since then we've had a plethora of footy games.

In *IS* the controls were the usual eight directions plus fire to pass and shoot, but it was this very simplicity I may add which helped to make the game so enjoyable. *EHIS* improves upon this by using a revolutionary form of clutch which allows you to leave the player in control running with the ball without having to touch the joystick. This way



you can select the type of shot required by pulling the joystick back or forward. A quick tap on the fire button along with a vertical jab on the joystick makes the player do a nifty little side step, thus avoiding any approaching member of the opposition.

In the olden days a tackle meant running the ball from under the feet of somebody, but *EHIS* updates this with sliding tackles. A backheel can be used to escape the onslaught of an aluminium studded boot, by holding down the fire button and flicking the stick backwards and forwards in a quick succession to perform the move, and works really well, allowing you to execute some excellent David Rocastle-like moves.

Throw-ins, free kicks and corners are handled automatically, but the penalties (yes these are included) can be handled manually in much the same way as a formal shot.

The goalkeeper can be controlled by the human player or by the computer.

The on-field controls are really just the tip of the iceberg, there are a whole maze of sub-options the most important of which allows you to edit your team and boost their individual skills. Energy, names and strip colours can also be edited, and not just for your chosen team, but also for the other seven teams in the league.

Best of all is the inspired option which allows two players to co-operate on the same team so you can blame any mistakes on a genuine person rather than an inanimate computer image.

Graphically *EHIS* is pretty unimpressive with chunky sprites which don't add much to the original, although the animation, and increased movement, is a definite improvement. Diving headers, three step goal kicks, sliding tackles and a few more additions have been thrown in on top of the basic movements making the game far more fun to watch. Sound is limited to crowd noises and the occassional blast on a horn in the background.

This isn't quite *Microprose Soccer* but it's still a vast improvement on many of the football games available.

Mark Patterson

Audiogenic
Price:
£9.99 disk
£12.95 cass

GRAPHICS	38%
SOUND	68%
VALUE	80%
PLAYABILITY	88%

84%

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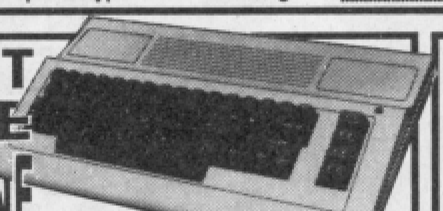
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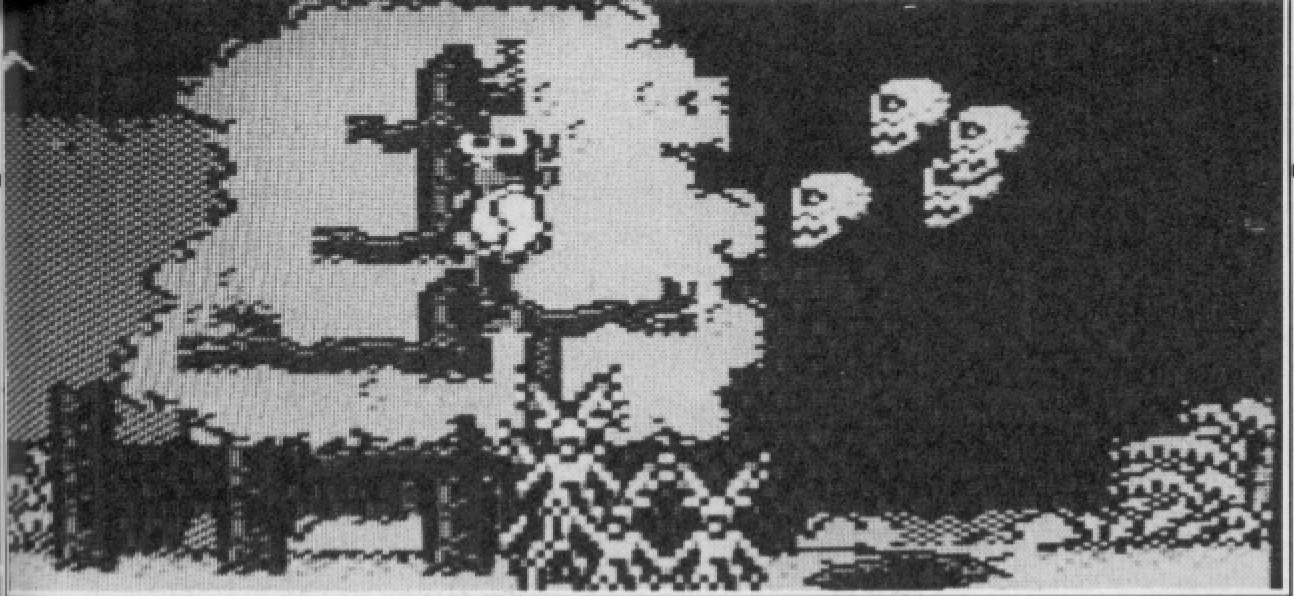
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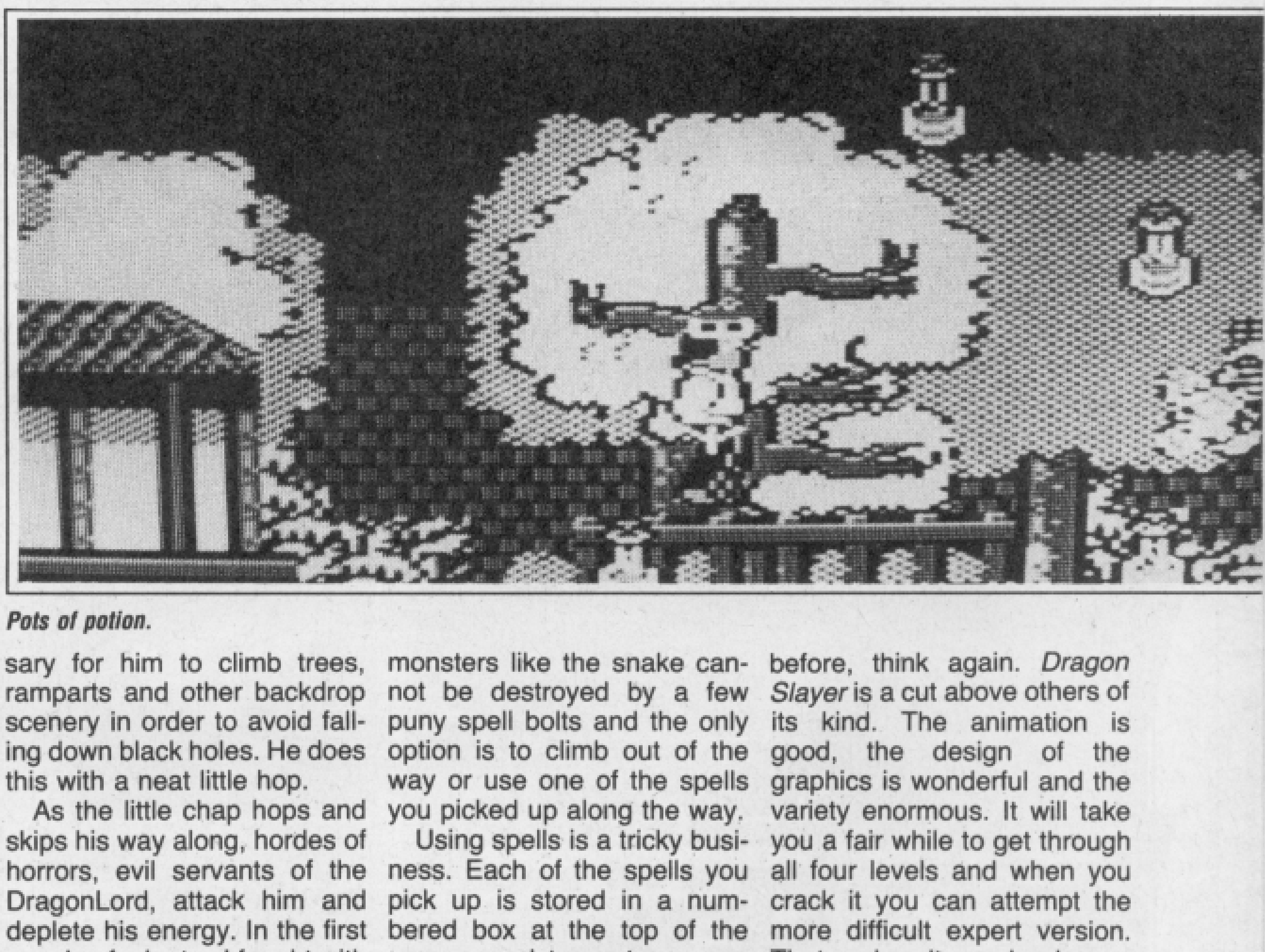


Skulls ahoy.

DRAGON SLAYER

CodeMaster's Plus range is the kind of novel idea that makes you wonder why nobody thought of it sooner. There are two versions of the game — a standard one to get you started and an expert version for later on when the standard one becomes a bit too easy to be any fun. It's also their first sally into the full price games market.

The game is supplied on two cassettes, one contains the program code, the other contains the data for the various game levels each of which is loaded in when you've completed the previous one.



Pots of potion.

Your character is a cute little knight with a chainmail vest and a crown on his head. He starts the game with one life, plenty of energy, no points and feeble spell power, but waltzes happily off to face the oncoming foe regardless. To continue his quest eastwards to the nether regions of the TV screen it is sometimes necessary for him to climb trees, ramparts and other backdrop scenery in order to avoid falling down black holes. He does this with a neat little hop.

As the little chap hops and skips his way along, hordes of horrors, evil servants of the DragonLord, attack him and deplete his energy. In the first couple of minutes I fought with formations of flying chalices, axes, pelicans, poisonous vials, mushrooms, sulks, jesters (no joke), snakes, lizards, disembodied eyes, bubbles, and a few others besides.

To fight off the evil marauders you fling spell power in their path and they disappear in a puff of smoke, sometimes leaving behind a scroll which you can pick up for extra energy or a spell which you can add to your book. Some monsters like the snake cannot be destroyed by a few puny spell bolts and the only option is to climb out of the way or use one of the spells you picked up along the way.

Using spells is a tricky business. Each of the spells you pick up is stored in a numbered box at the top of the screen, and to cast one you have to let go of the joystick and hit the appropriate key. In this way you can let loose with a smartbomb spell, turn into a frog and leap tall ramparts in a single bound, fly like a bird, become invincible or you can cast a puzzle spell — so called becaue I couldn't work out what it does. This is one of those games where the instructions are "try things out and see what happens".

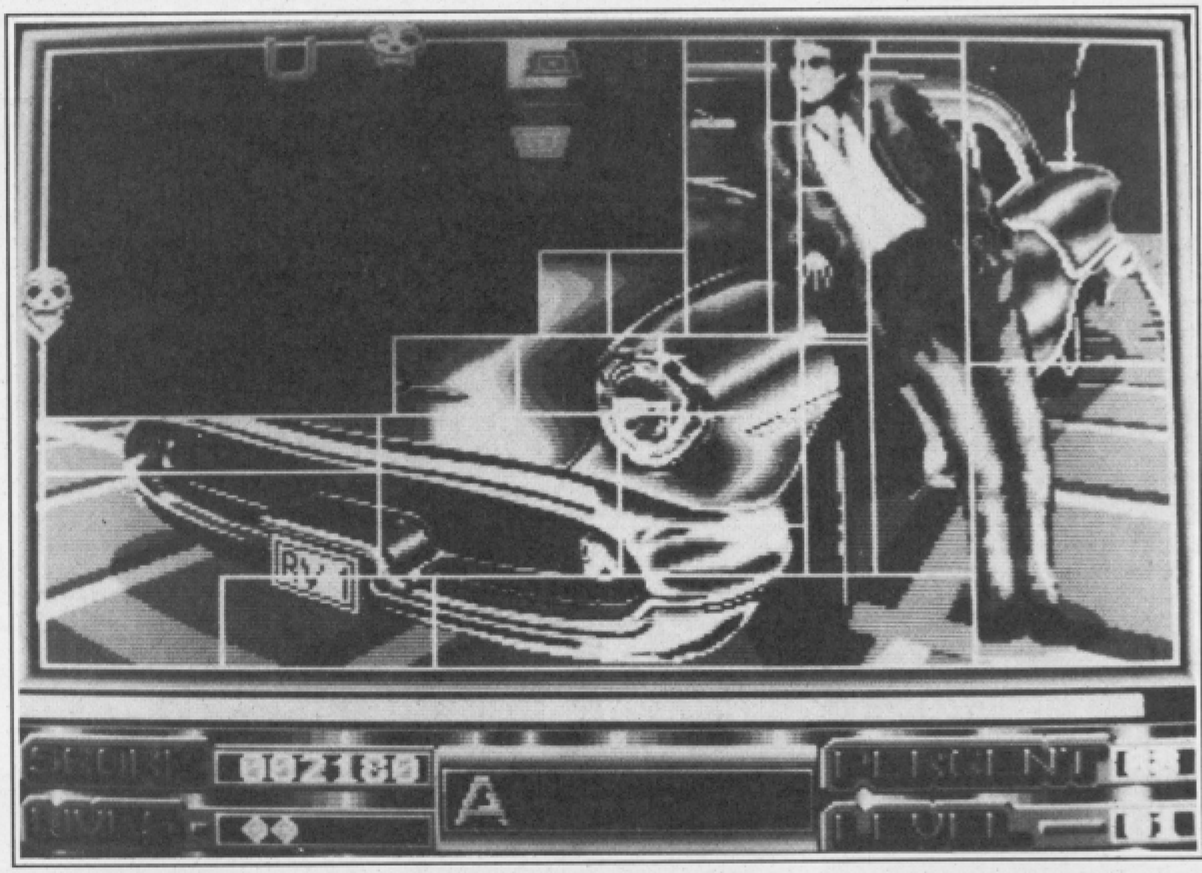
If you think you've seen it all before, think again. *Dragon Slayer* is a cut above others of its kind. The animation is good, the design of the graphics is wonderful and the variety enormous. It will take you a fair while to get through all four levels and when you crack it you can attempt the more difficult expert version. That makes it good value as well as good fun. Nothing new but this deserves to do well.

Ken McMahon

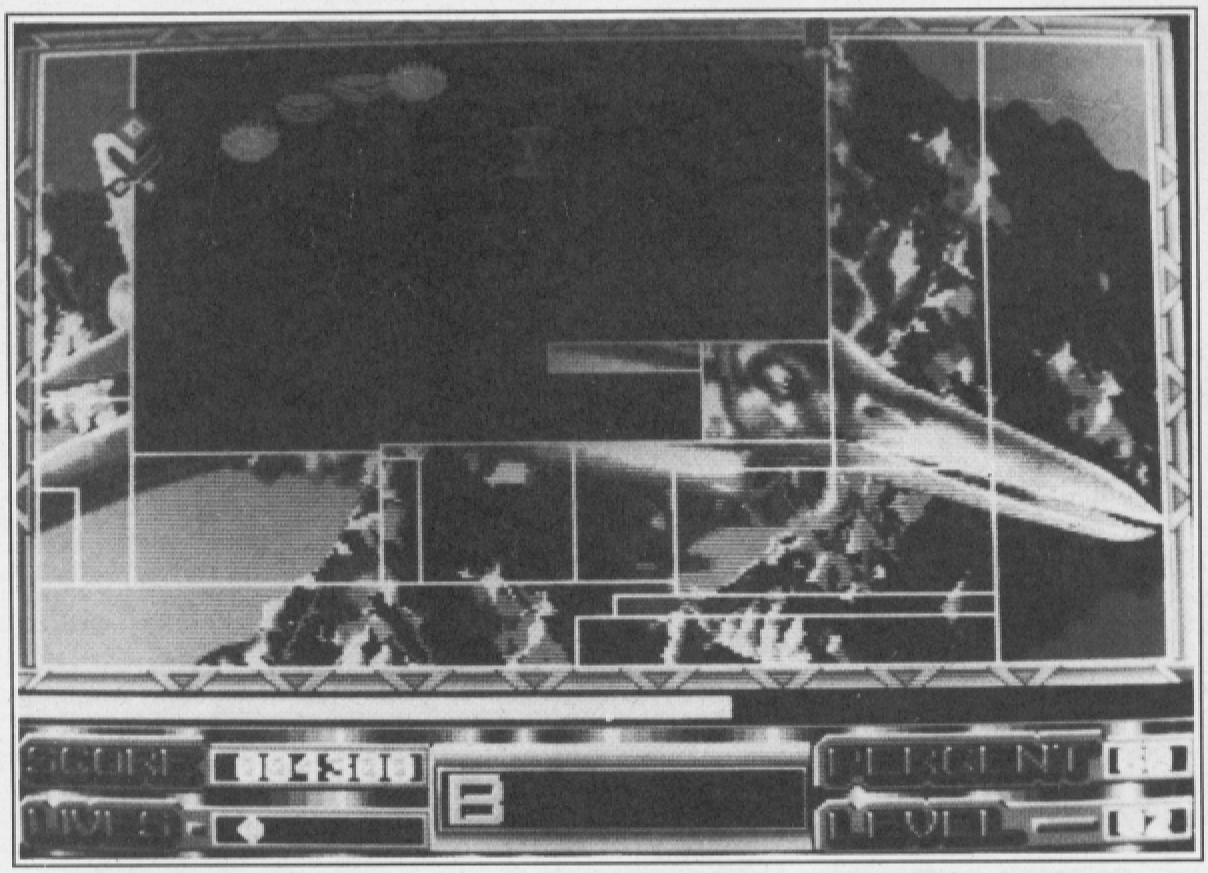
Codemasters Plus
Price: £8.95 cass

GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	68%
LASTABILITY	75%
PLAYABILITY	76%

73%



POWERSTYX



Axiom
Price: £14.95

The first game I ever played was *Styx* or *Quix*, or whichever variant you've heard of. It's one of the simplest, and still, to my mind, enjoyable games to play.

For those of you who are too young to remember West Ham's momentous FA Cup victory, a Labour government, Scotland qualifying for a World Cup and a hot summer, *Powerstyx* involves drawing lines around a screen in order to cordon off a random life-force which moves around. If you can grab more than 75% of the screen you progress to the next level. Axiom's version takes its lead from the recently revived coin-op in which a picture is revealed as you complete chunks of the screen.

In *Powerstyx* various icons will occasionally float across the screen which, should you guide your marker into one of them, will result in a change in the game. There's general disagreement over what some of them are meant to represent. Nick Kelly has it that it's a banana that speeds you up, I say it's a tube of paint. Then there's something that looks to me like a Eurocheque symbol. Either way it takes you to the next screen. Question marks may give you anything at random including the loss of a life, as will the cross that floats across the void.

It's not only the icons that are a bit dodgy graphically. The backgrounds you reveal are all pretty disappointing artistically. They display all the aesthetic taste of an Athena poster. You known the kind I mean, they invariably depict a woman with a red hat, holding a blue cocktail, whilst speaking on a pink telephone — all in yellow frame.

This might be forgiveable if *Powerstyx* had the gameplay spot on. It doesn't, it's infuriatingly hard, and completely unrewarding. Sometimes you die again within an instant of having died. The controls are fiddly and in general I have to say I hate playing it though for some reason I keep coming back to it at the moment. I guess I'm just a pervert. Healthy minded people should avoid this.

Mike Pattenden

SOUND	**41%**
GRAPHICS	**39%**
LASTABILITY	**52%**
PLAYABILITY	**40%**

40%



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ELITE

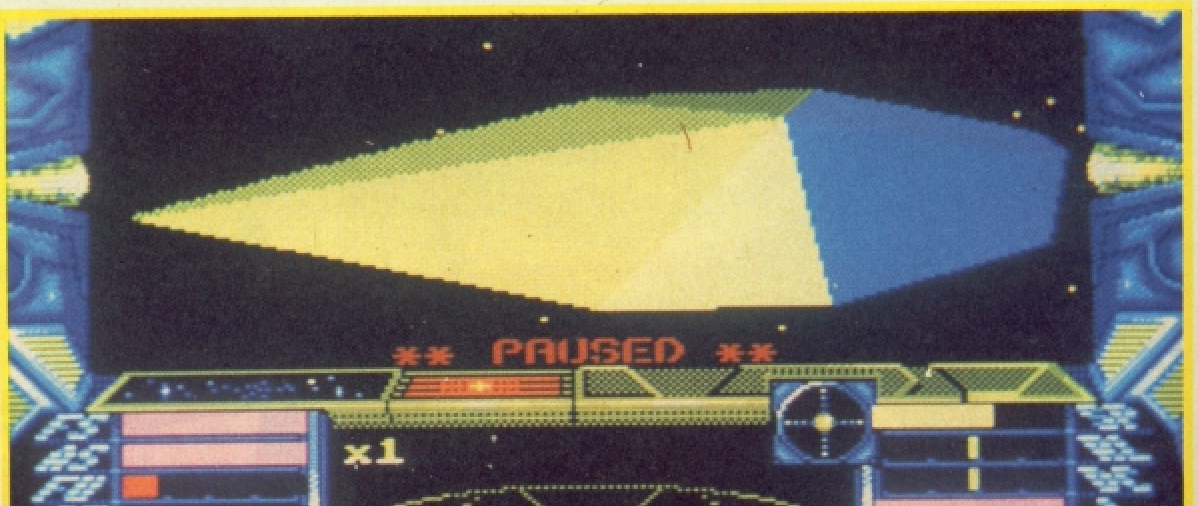
David Braben and Ian Bell's *Elite* is possibly the most famous and popular computer game ever written — in Britain at least. The original BBC B program soon spawned versions for the other eight-bit micros, and the 64 version has been in and out of the charts ever since it was released way back in the first half of 1985.

In those days, when I was still a gamesplaying civilian, I was one of the many thousands who trooped out and bought *Elite* — and I played it to death (well, I got as far as 'Deadly' anyway.) News of a version for the 16-bit machines came then as a source of some interest. True to form, Firebird have taken their sweet time over it but, better late than never, *Elite* has arrived on the Amiga.

For those unfamiliar with the game, it's a space combat/trading simulation displayed using 3D vector graphics. Starting with nothing more than a standard Mk III Cobra ship, the player is launched into the wild black yonder in order to trade goods between planets (or rather, between their orbiting space stations), while blasting anyone who gets in his way. As money is earned by buying and selling a number of commodities (food, computers, textiles and so on) the player can equip his ship with all manner of bolt-on goodies, ranging from powerful lasers, to homing missiles, an automatic docking computer and the all-important escape pod.

As the player's Cobra becomes the ultimate hard machine, he can then start trading with the more dangerous systems, which inevitably means falling foul of hordes of vicious space pirates; attack other traders and steal their cargo, which draws the attention of hordes of vicious police craft; and also indulge in running some profitable contraband, which means having to fend off both greedy space pirates AND nosey space police. As more and more 'kills' are notched up, so the player's rating progresses from 'Harmless' to the supreme accolade of 'Elite' — which is no mean feat, by the

In space, no-one can hear you barter.



Firebird
Price: £19.95





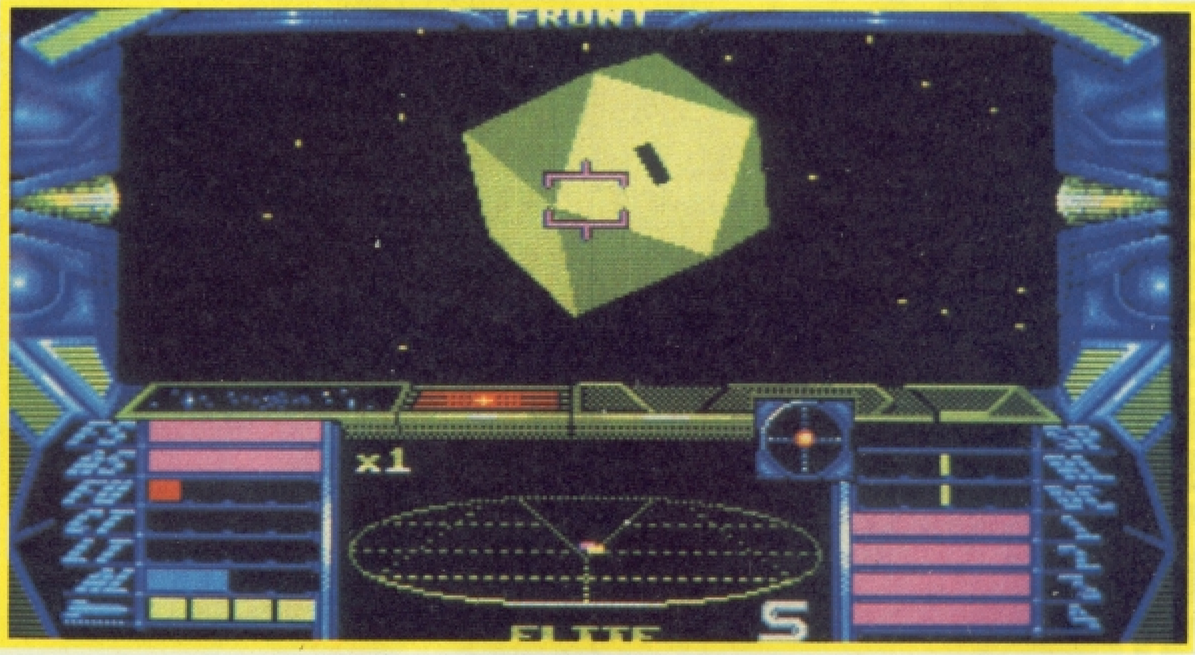
So what about the other 480K? (Well, nearly.)

way. Fortunately, the Amiga game features both disk and RAM save options.

With eight galaxies and a total of around 2,000 systems to visit, potential Elitists aren't short of places to go. And while there's plenty of hyperspacing, docking, launching and fruitless journeys to be endured, there are also one or two surprises to be discovered along the way, adding some variety and incentive to the task in hand (watch out for secret missions, Thargoids and Tribbles . . .)

My first impression of Amiga *Elite* was of disappointment. Apart from being filled-in, and having the dubious addition of some gaudy static graphics, the game hasn't progressed any since the 32K BBC program of 1984. There's so much you could do with the game on a 16-bit machine, yet it's potential remains untapped.

However, it's not all doom and gloom: this is without doubt the best version of the game to appear so far, and is even more entertaining than its predecessors. Dogfighting — which always suffered because of the lousy update on the 64 — is now smooth, colourful and enhanced by a pleasing thud when the lasers hit home. It's also the most appealing aspect of the game, since trading does become a (necessary) chore after a while. Mind you, as Ford Prefect might say, the Cobra Mk III still looks like a fish and steers like a cow!



I suppose the purists would say (in Ben Elton-style pseud voice), 'But you can't change Elite — it's a classic!' Well, we're not really on about some bit of coloured rag in the Louvre, are we? It's only a game after all, and anyone who has already had a taste of the action (that should include most of you) might be advised to wait for Gremlin's *Federation Of Free Traders* to appear before going for a second helping.
Steve Jarratt

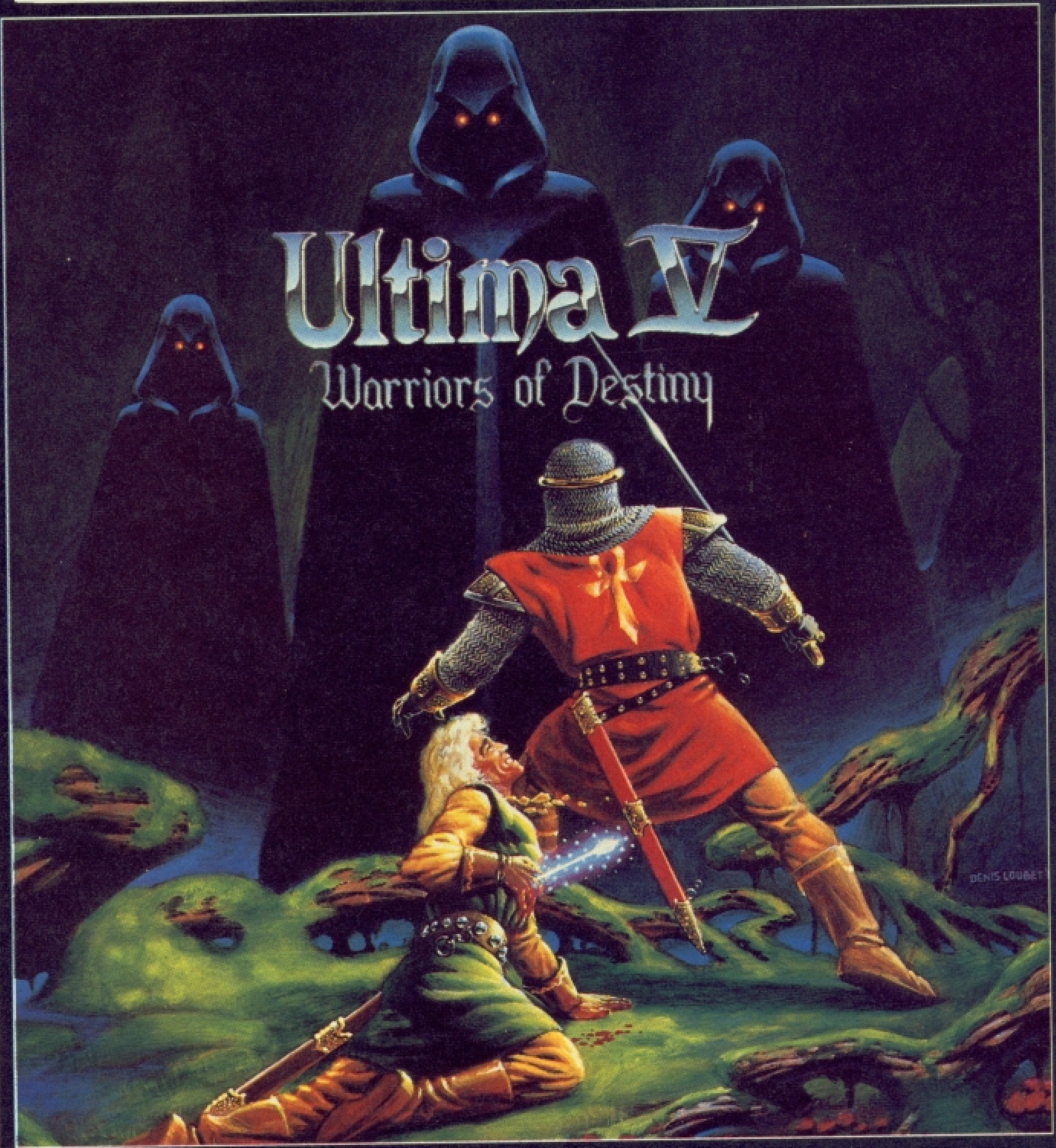
They came, they saw, they did a little shopping . . .



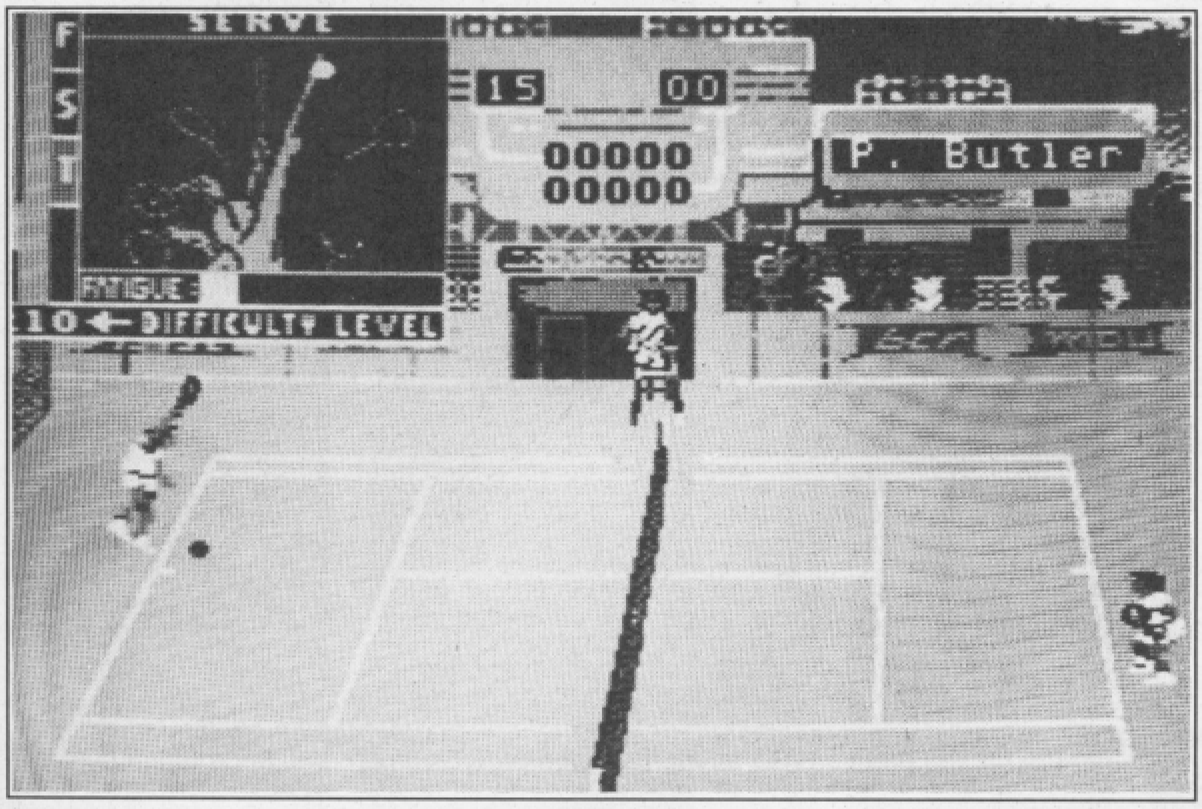


SOUND	**53%**
GRAPHICS	**74%**
LASTABILITY	**79%**
PLAYABILITY	**85%**

83%


Ultima V
Warriors of Destiny
DENIS LOUBET

SERVE & VOLLEY



A confession to start out: I've never been that fond of simulations. Flying simulations, driving simulations, American football simulations, they all leave me cold. I used to think that this unnatural hatred for things simulational was due to the fact that I can't fly, drive or play American football. *Serve & Volley*, however, gives the lie to this theory: I *can* play tennis, *(after a fashion — Ed)* but I still found it as boring as watching the grass grow on Centre Court.

Then again, perhaps it's because *Serve & Volley* isn't really a very hot example of the simulator genre.

My heart sank when I read the somewhat depressing instructions: "ball boys patrols *(sic)* the perimeter as you take your place at the serving line" — as any fule kno, the line behind which you stand to serve is called the base-line, the service line being the line which runs across the court, creating the service boxes. Then there's the extraordinary assertion that grass is the slowest playing surface followed by clay and then hard. I can't believe that anybody who's ever played the tennis, or even watched it on TV, could make a howler of such epic proportions (grass is in fact the fastest court surface and hard the slowest). And I'm not just being nit-picky here; the instructions read like they were drafted by somebody who really didn't know anything about the sport they were attempting to simulate.

But whatever faults the instructions may have had, at least they were mildly amusing. *Serve & Volley* is quite simply terrible to play.

In common with many sports simulations, an inordinate amount of work is done planning each move, with comparatively little satisfying action in between. This may be someway justifiable in a sport like American football where coaches routinely plan out moves and routines on the drawingboard, but in reaction sports it becomes farcical.

If you pause the game at each choice panel to decide where you're going to move, where you want the ball to land and what stroke you wish to use, it turns the sport into an utterly dreary game of draughts, with virtually no skill or coordination involved at all; and if you play at the pace of the computer, the number of activities which you force your tiny, wooden onscreen character to go through in order to hit the ball makes a joke of the whole concept of a "simulation".

What small amount of skill there is consists in timing hitting the fire button to coincide with the passage of a moving bar. Depending on how close you can make the bar stop to the centre of the "difficulty level window", the computer produces a calculation of how likely your shot is to be successful. Then of course there's the usual range of player characteristics and statistics to select from, difficulty levels and even the prospect of manufacturing your own player. I mean, how boring, what has any of this farting around with statistics and configurations got to do with the game of tennis?

Sorry to be such a damp squib, but it would have been a far better idea if rain had stopped programming.

Nick Kelly

Electronic Arts/ Accolade
Price: £9.95 cass £14.95 disk

Game, set and match — Kelly.

The ball was in!



SOUND	10%
GRAPHICS	32%
LASTABILITY	19%
PLAYABILITY	24%

29%

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One hotel on Mayfair, please (C+VG school of caption writing.)

ESPIONAGE

If you've already played *Espionage*, the board game, you'll know that it has rather tenuous connections with the aforementioned activity. Espionage to me means tape recorders that self-destruct, biros that transmit coded messages and wrinkled Ruskies with bad teeth and vays off making you tock. You'll find none of that in this game.

Nevertheless it's pretty good in its own right, and if you've never come across *Espionage*, it's a mixture of chess and draughts with the added element of capturing something, ie microfilm, and getting it safely back to base. The game is played on a board divided symmetrically into squares, with each player allocated a team of twelve secret agents.

Anyway, here's a quick taste of what it's all about. The four players begin the game with their men assembled at the four sides of the board. Like chess, there are different types of piece, each able to move only in a specified way. The team is made up of six courier agents (which move only diagonally), four secret agents (which can move in any direction) and two surveillance agents (forward and back only).

The object of the game is to get the four microfilms at the centre of the board and bring them back. Only the secret agents and couriers can carry microfilm. On top of that, you must terminate as many of the oppositon as you can.

Agents can take opponents out of the game by jumping over them. It's very similar to draughts and includes multiple taking and 'sanctioning' — you lose a piece by failing to take another when you could have. There's also a chess-like 'castle' option in which different agents on the same team can swap squares with each other.

That's enough explanation, how does it play as a computer game? Well as always, there are good points and bad points. The major flaw is that the board is too large to be displayed as a whole on the screen. You must scroll around it or zoom in and out. Neither method is wholy satisfactory. Without zooming, it's difficult to make out the icons for the three types of piece. Bear in mind that you have 48 of them on the board if you choose the four-player option. Zooming in makes pieces clearer but denies you an overall view. And for some inexplicable reason, the icon for each piece changes. This takes some getting used to and may be frustrating if you've played *Espionage* as it was intended to be played — on a board.

The obvious good point is that you can play it by yourself against the computer which can take all the three other positions on the board. You'll learn something from the strategies employed.

I'm not a board game nut, but *Espionage* looks to me to be better than most. The computer version is well programmed and implemented but suffers drastically from the size of the board display. Apart from that, it's well worth it and you get a free sticker and poster in the box. Pity. I'd have rather had a vodka martini, shaken not stirred.

Bohdan Buciak

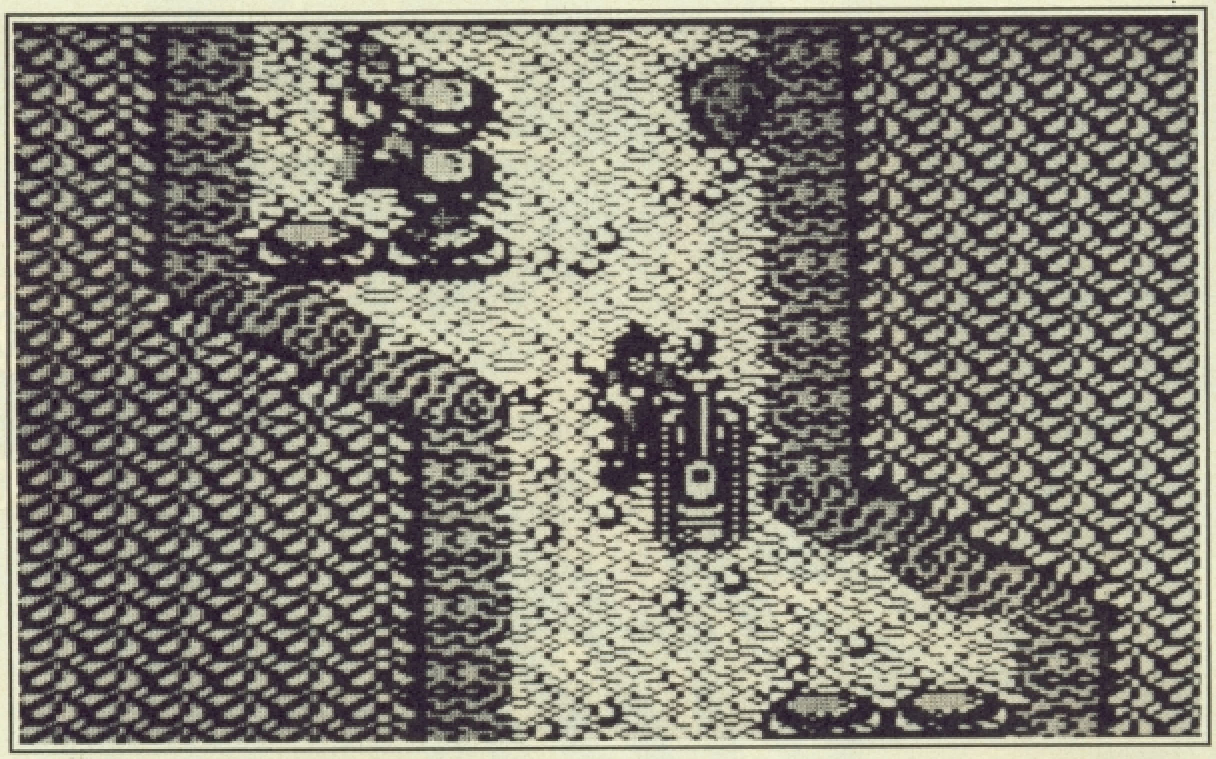
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GRAPHICS	**63%**
LASTABILITY	**62%**
PLAYABILITY	**55%**

57%



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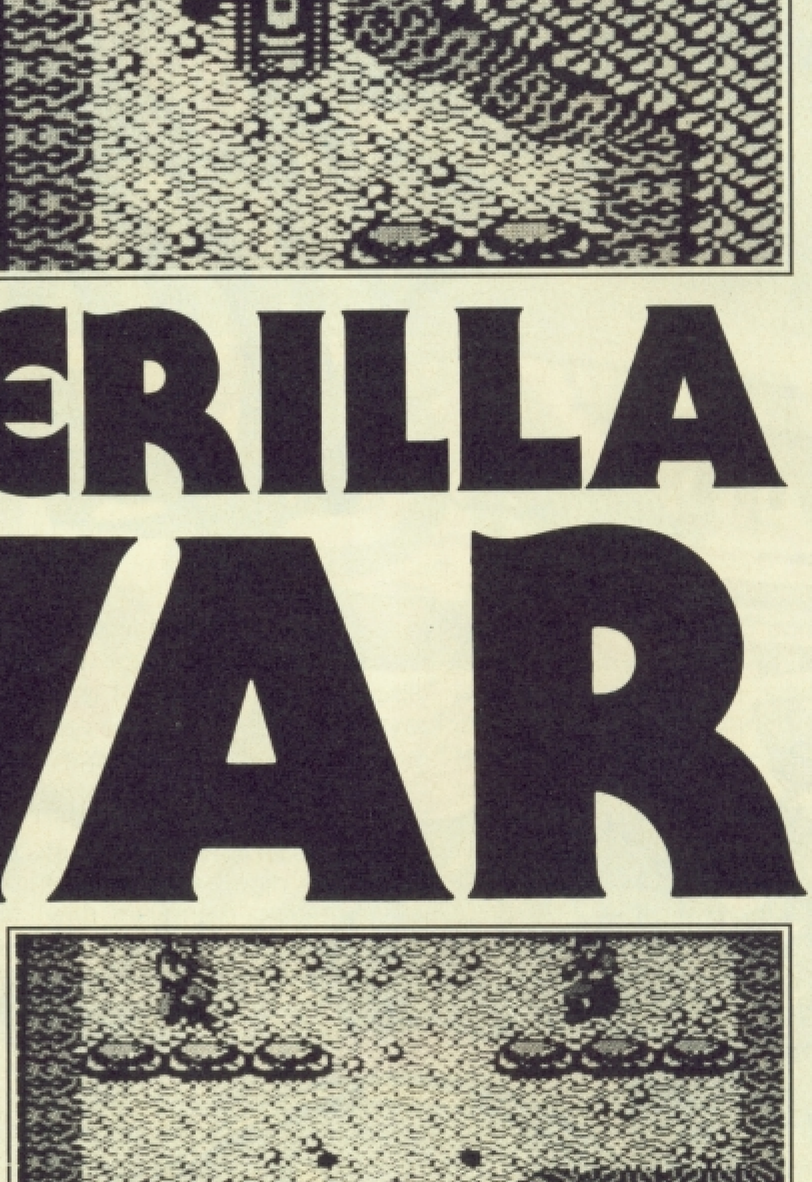


Tanks but no tanks.

GUERILLA WAR

It seems that game ideas are now well and truly beginning to dry up. *Guerilla War*, Ocean's new signing contains nothing that hasn't been seen before.

Plot: A two man commando team fighting insurmountable odds against the forces of a vicious dictator and all his minions. The dictator's name probably begins with Z and



doesn't have a lot of vowels in it. Done before in *Ikari Warriors*.

Gameplay: Five multi-loaded levels of blasting action along an upwardly scrolling jungle area (*Commando*) with a bit of left-right scrolling to provide a larger play area (*Flying Shark*). You can select either directional control or rotational control (*Ikari Warriors*, again). Rotational control means that you can turn the main character and make him fire in any of eight directions, regardless of the direction of movement. You are armed with a basic rifle, but can also use grenades to fire over obstacles or to clear the way through walls, fences or any other type of normally impassable objects (*Commando*, *Who Dares Wins 2*, almost everything else, really.) Some of the enemy, when shot, leave behind an item of more powerful weaponry (*Nemesis*) such as rocket launchers and flamethrowers.

Graphics: Large, chunky, badly coloured and lacking in variety — generally dire. (Sadly, similar to many other games.)

Sound: Choose whether you want to have sound effects or music (nearly every 64 game ever). Music is dull, grating and repetitive. Sound effects are sparse and simplistic.

Playability: A major downer. The sticky response time and poor collision detection make getting anywhere frustratingly hard.

Not only is *Guerilla War* a very poor conversion (there are no tanks for you to climb into — why not?), it's also a very poor game in its own right. Maybe the next one will be good, Either way, give this one a wide berth.

The one single, original aspect of this game is that proud owners of the Cheetah 125 joystick have the option to make use of its rotational function and extra 'smart-bomb' button. This would be great if *Guerrilla Wars* was actually worth loading up in the first place.

Tony Dillon

Price:
£9.95 cass
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SOUND	**24%**
GRAPHICS	**32%**
LASTABILITY	**24%**
PLAYABILITY	**19%**

21/



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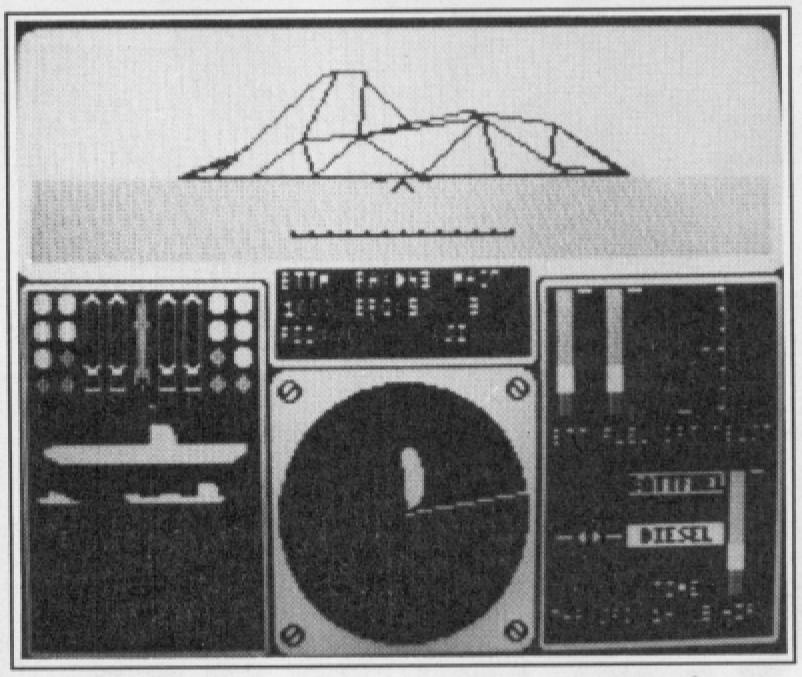
CHEAPO ROUND-

OCEAN CONQUEROR

Rack-It

If you're the type who likes to spend hours on end in a darkened room pretending to be captain of a sub and playing *Silent Service* till all hours of the morning — you're weird. You may also be interested to hear about Rack-It's latest release *Ocean Conqueror*, which runs along similar lines to the Microprose prog. I say 'may be', because this conversion of the old Spectrum release is a bit on the naff side. The links with its Spectrum past are a bit too strong for my liking: the graphics are all hi-res character-block coloured, and the sound effects are all reminiscent of a bleeper rather than a SID chip.

On the gameplay side, it's also a bit lacking — in fact it feels like an advanced BASIC program: there's a distinct pause after keypresses, and the 'vector graphic' display is incredibly slow to update. Aesthetics aside, the strategic element consists of crawling along underwater, sinking the occasional battle cruiser and watching the ocean go past. If you fancy some adrenalin-pumping action, you might be advised to head ashore. **(58%)**



Ocean Conqueror

POWERPLAY

Players

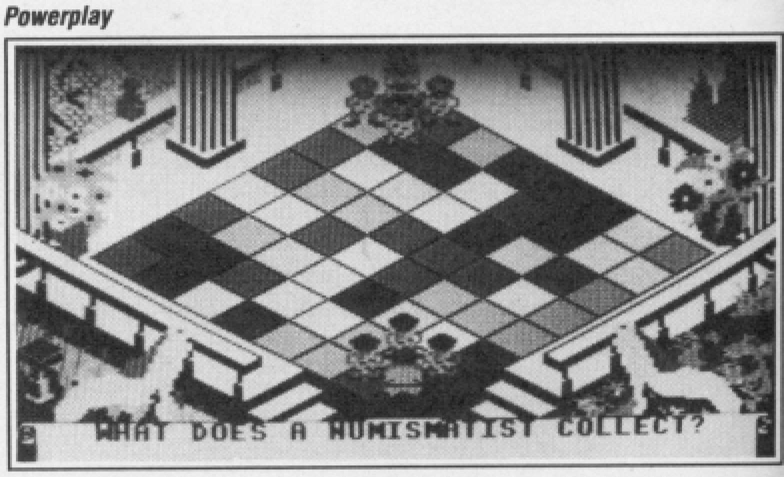
Fans of Triv games have been spoilt for choice over the last year or so, but none of them are really any good for the poor old solo player — except for the old game *Powerplay*.

Basically, you take control of four demi-gods who attempt to beat four real Gods at a cross between *Trivial Pursuit* and *Battlechess*. To move from square to square, you must answer a general knowledge question with a time limit. The character can move to any adjacent square, and if they are directed toward a square already occupied by one of the opposition, a challenge takes place. In this case, the answers must be given inside a much stricter time limit. If three suitable replies are given, the opposing God is defeated and is relegated by one God unit (ie, Zeus gets knocked down to Atlas, or something of that ilk).

The ultimate aim is to destroy all the opposing deities by reducing their status to human, and then doing them over once more, killing them. Once all four gods have been destroyed, you win the game.

This adds a subtle twist to the proceedings, and can be as much fun when played alone as when played against another person, or in a group. **(92%)**

Powerplay



PULSOIDS

Mastertronic

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water — Mastertronic release... a *Breakout* clone! Actually, it IS safe to go back in the water, because *Pulsoids* is pretty good. Instead of a ball, you have these bouncing laser beam-thingies which have been ripped straight out of *Pulse Warrior* (Mastertronic, last ish.)

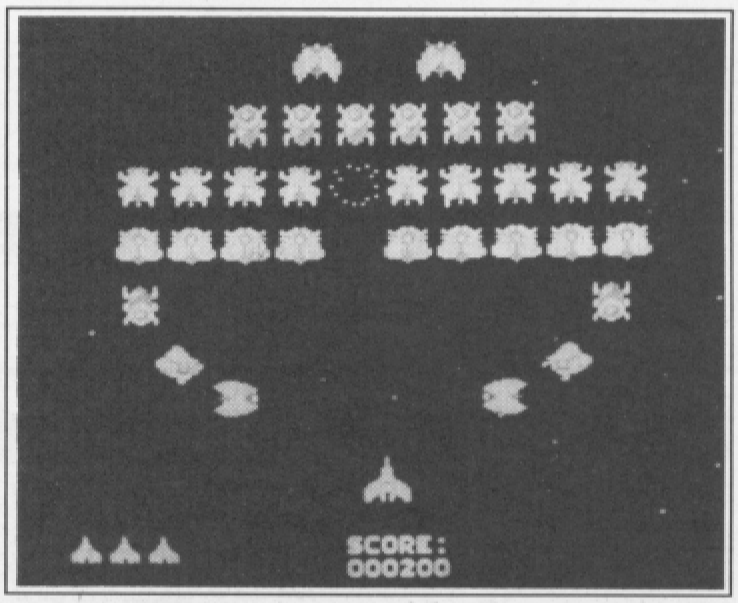
The usual Arkanoid-style collectibles are in evidence, plus a couple of specials, and there are 32 screens to be completed. It feels good, plays well and is more fun than you might expect. **(88%)**

TRAZ

Gamebusters

Although *Traz* is less than 12 months old, the re-release is now available on the Gamebusters label. If you didn't catch it the first time round (maybe you already owned one of the several million *Breakout* clones released) then you could do worse than pick it up now with its greatly reduced price tag.

Cheapo of The Month



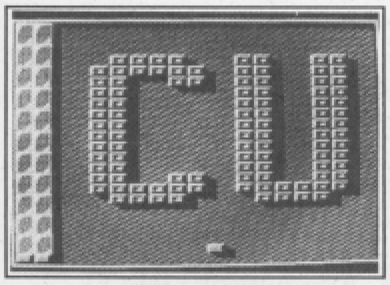
GAPLUS

Mastertronic

This spiffy little game is about as close to the arcade coin-op *Gaplus* as you are going to get on the 64. Written by Ash 'n' Dave (of many a wonderful Compunet demo) *Gaplus* is a straightforward *Galaxians*-style game — with one or two minor additions.

Swarms of alien ships appear on-screen, briefly whizzing around before heading into formation at the top of the screen. When the formation is complete (minus the ships that have been blown away in the process) the aliens swoop down toward the player's ship, dropping missiles as they go.

As arcade conversions go, this is right up amongst the full-price efforts for authenticity (I've counted up to 35 sprites on screen!) and with a paltry two quid price tag, you'd be a complete drongo not to rush out this very minute and buy it. 'Nuff said. **(97%)**



Traz

As *Breakout* games go, this is far from being best of the bunch, but it does contain a very neat screen editor with which to knock up frustrating screens of your own design. This is dead easy to use and gives the game a much-needed shot in the arm.

There's plenty of variety in the game itself, including all the features of competitors such as *Arkanoid* and *Krakout* — plus one or two of its own devising, such as two bats, several exits, refracting walls, pinball bumpers and scrolling backdrops which frazzle your eyes. All this for only two quid? Can't be bad. **(90%)**

X-15 ALPHA MISSION

Mastertronic

This Activision re-release sees the player strapped into the cockpit of NASA's X-15 in order to locate and destroy an orbiting space station manned by terrorists.

Split into two sections, the first represents the X-15's flight into space, blasting missiles, helicopters and jets, and dodging asteroids en route to the orbital platform.

Once on board, you despatch several robots to eliminate the external weapon systems. The last robot then trundles inside to destroy the central power system and thus the whole station.

Not too much of a strain to complete this one; best not to bother in the first place really. **(42%)**

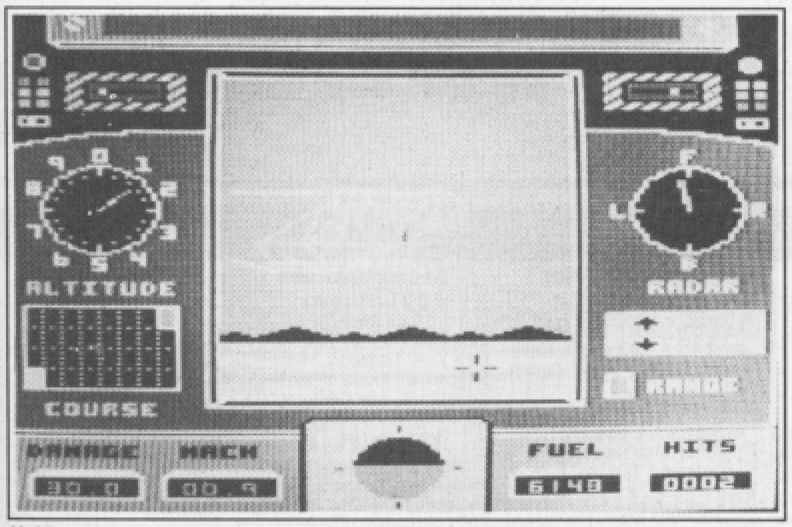
HOW TO BE A COMPLETE BASTARD

Mastertronic

Hands up all those who got Ade Edmonson's book as a stocking-filler last Christmas? Virgin made a game of the book and now it's back in cheapo form.

At its simplest, *HTBACB* is an arcade adventure of sorts: walk around, pick things up, set fire to the cat, eat curry, drink, fart, and generally spoil a yuppie party by being, as the title suggests, a complete bastard.

The game wasn't really that funny then, and it hasn't improved with age, and the gameplay sucks, too. If you really want to be a bastard, buy it for someone as a Christmas stocking filler. **(27%)**



X-15

UP

EREBUS

Mastertronic

And lo! The god Braybrook begat *Uridium* and *Uridium* begat followers unto itself, and everyone was happy — especially the hangers-on who couldn't think of an original idea themselves. Without going into too much detail, *Erebus* which is being re-released under the Mastertronic legend, is a slow *Uridium* clone. That's it really: shoot the aliens, dodge the constructions, when enough aliens are dead go to the entrance to the next level — simple.

Erebus looks OK and plays reasonably well, if a little slow, but if you haven't got something that is extremely similar, I'd be utterly gobsmacked. And even if you didn't, Mr B's great grandaddy of them all is knocking around in the shops for the same price. No contest. **(47%)**

DAN DARE II

Mastertronic

Yet another re-release! And it's not too old, either (probably didn't do too well the first time around.) The Gang of Five were responsible for both Dan games, and although the first was hailed as an original and innovative arcade adventure, the second was only weakly smiled upon as a merely competent shoot 'em up.

Dan (or the Mekon, for the roles can be reversed) has to belt around the Mekon's spaceship on his hovercycle, discovering the Mekon's pupal warriors who are about to hatch from their plexiglass life support systems, and infest the Earth with their loathsome green ways. Dan has to clear each level of Mekey's mutants before he is allowed into the next, all the while blasting the Treen guards who are always getting in his way.

Dan Dare II has some gorgeous graphics and fast action, but the gameplay is a bit too shallow to be regarded as a lasting proposition. Not a bad budget release, though — you could do a lot worse. **(76%)**

STEVE JARRATT

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CU LETTERS

Purist

● It seems to me that the standard of your Amiga reviews is going downhill. The reviewers seem to be devoid of any knowledge of the Amiga's hardware and capabilities. Probably the worst case of this yet was in your review of *Zynaps* (8 overall).

I have this game and, to say the least, it's hardly anything special. How can you justify giving its bland graphics a mark of 8? The backgrounds are very dull and the blurred scrolling is an insult to the Amiga. The moving objects are well defined but move badly — anything moving by more than one pixel per frame becomes extremely blurred. A prime example of this is on the end of level motherships — just compare this with the C64 version and you'll see how bad it is.

A mark of 7 for the sound just isn't on for a few crude digitised FX and a farty rendition of the C64 original's theme.

The gameplay is crippled by the terrible movement of the ship which jerks about on the higher speeds. (What happened to the brilliant inertia we saw on the C64 version?)

In all, *Zynaps* on the Amiga deserved no higher than 6 overall — especially when the C64 version craps on it!

It's a great pity that *Katakis* was banned; *Katakis* is excellent in graphics, sound and gameplay. The completely smooth scrolling, movement, great sound FX and music literally wipe the floor with *Zynaps*. It would have done the software industry good to have seen what the Amiga really can do — it might have given them the incentive to write decent games specificially for the Amiga instead of pouring out crummy ST port-overs (*Zynaps* and countless others) and in some cases charging £5 more. The present situation proves that software companies are only interested in profits and as far as the Amiga is concerned it's: "Port over the ST version, ignore the Amiga's superior hardware and charge more — they'll buy it — they're desperate". Thankfully there's a few software companies out there who see sense and write Amiga only games.

Remember, twenty-odd quid is a lot of dosh to blow on a crap game and people rely on mags like CU for accurate reviews. So please, make sure you all agree on a rating. If its blatantly obvious that a game is yet another cruddy ST Port-over — say so!

Mr C. Cents

The quality of CU's review is as high as ever. What you had was one reviewer's opinion. Others might disagree. That said Zynaps is by no means bad. Other readers need not despair about* Katakis *because word has it that it may yet appear.

Y. Zup

You're too generous

● Congratulations! The new look is well 'ard. The colour, the new typeface, the mixture of 64 and Amiga reviews, and even Mike's new brain (sorry Mike).

I was upset when I found reviews as a percentage but after I read the explanation for the change I didn't mind so much. Overall this change was worth the extra 10p (Wot! Only 10p more? Luvva duck, guv'nor!).

The free *Blastin' Master* tape was totally sizzling whilst the Amiga *Op Wolf* offer was a real treat (I want an Amiga, perhaps you could lend me one?) But why wasn't there a free £4 million mansion taped to the front and a half price Porsche offer inside as well?

John Marshall
Emsworth,
Hants

Sorry about the lack of a cover-mounted house but what with complaints from newsagents and the falling price of housing we pulled that idea. The half price Porsche offer has been postponed 'til next issue.

Seeing stars

● It was my birthday a couple of days ago and my brother bought me the great *Last Ninja 2.*

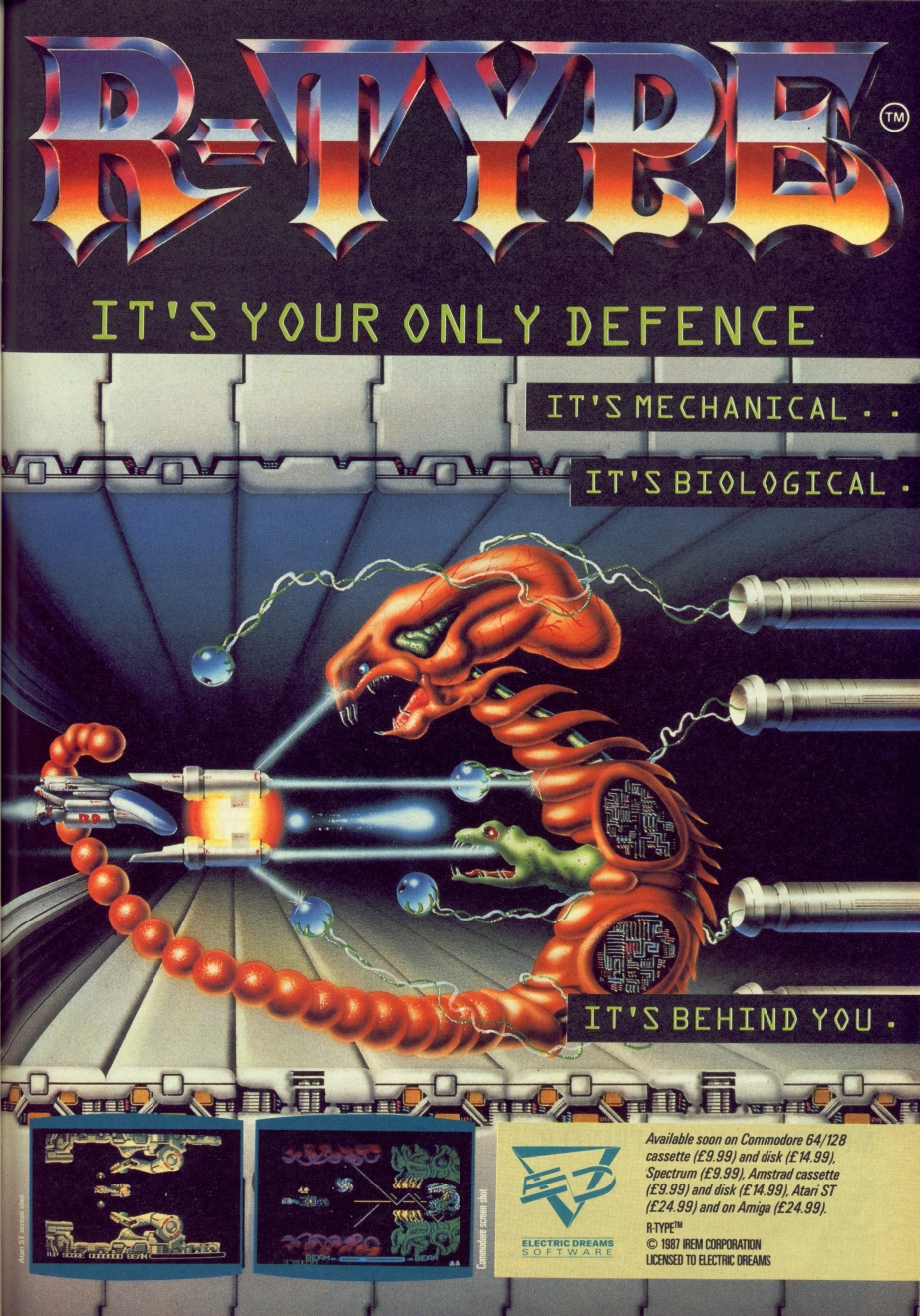
When I opened the box I expected to find as advertised, in the comuter mags not only the game but the free map, handbook, plastic shuriken and the Ninja mask.

But when I opened it all that was in it was the game, the book and the map. So then I told my brother. We had a look at the box and on the back was written 'contents'. Stuck over the contents was a price sticker underneath which was the contents listing including the mask and shuriken. And on closer inspection we noticed that the price tag covering the contents was applied by Boots.

David Shine
Ilford,
Essex

It's not really System 3's fault. Boots refused to stock the game with the mask and shuriken in it. Maybe they should have changed the price too.




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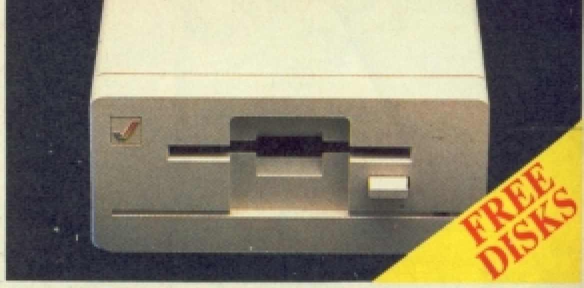
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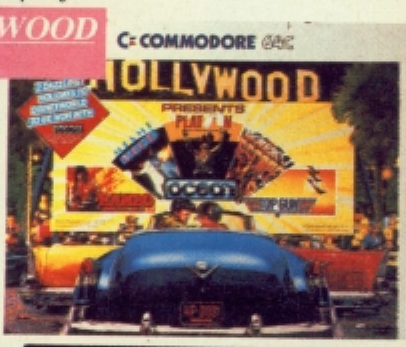
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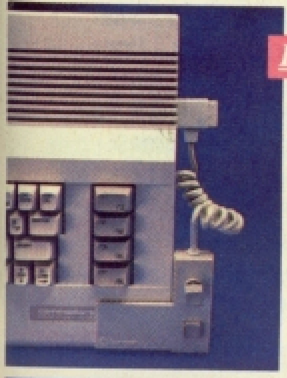
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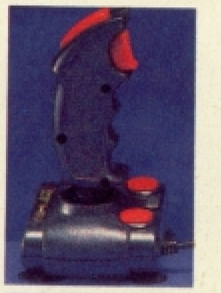
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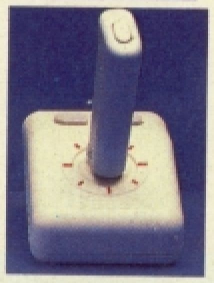
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PLAYED IN JAPAN ARCADES



To the jet-lagged first-time Western visitor, Tokyo resembles nothing so much as a giant pinball machine, bright, noisy, covered in flashing lights — and very, very expensive if you happen to get hooked on it!

Not for nothing has Japan's bustling, modern and overcrowded capital gained the dubious distinction of being the world's dearest city. A beer will set you back three quid, you'll be lucky to walk away from the dinner table without having shed at least twenty pounds for your feed of raw fish and seaweed, a journey across town on the highly complex rapid transit system might cost you another three pounds worth of your fast diminishing yen supply and even a quick blast at the humblest coin-op will set you back about 40p.

But if you want to find out what The Next Big Thing in the wonderful world of arcade gaming is likely to be, well, you'll just have to dig deep into your pockets (or your editor's) and come up with the dosh, because Tokyo is the centre of the games'n' gadgets universe. If London's streets are paved with gold, then Tokyo's are paved with PCB boards. Unlike Blighty where arcades are generally spoken of in the same breath as opium dens and porno cinemas, Japanese houses of fun are designed for all the family, and tend to be thronged by everybody from schoolboys to stockbrokers. Of course there are some regional variations; scattered liberally among the latest coin-op blastabouts and driving sims are such unfamiliar sights as the not very right-on strip Mah Jong machines (in which you play a Japanese version of dominoes against a sultry onscreen female opponent, the object of the exercise being to force her to strip down to her Barbie-doll fundamentals) and rows of Japan's answer to the fruit machine, Pachinko. Indeed, so popular is this strange variation on the pinball theme — in which you compete to try and run ball bearings through a maze of obstacles and traps into your collecting tray — that whole three-storey buildings are filled with the machines.

Despite these competing attractions, however, the main recreational activity for yer average young Tokyo-ite is blasting, driving and puzzling through the latest coin-ops, and hordes of black-uniformed schoolboys can be found thronging the arcades which litter Tokyo's primary coin-op district, Takadanobaba. The side streets here are choc-a with arcades, most of which are tied to, and feature games drawn mainly from, one of the various large coin-op companies. It's in these crowded arcades that you'll find the hottest young game players in the city, vying with each other to crack the spanking new games which are often site-tested here.

When you discover T-shirts, badges and posters of top games on sale in these streets you begin to realise just how popular arcade

HOT CHASE

KONAMI

Driving-with-a-little-bit-added fans are going to be having a field day; already Taito's brilliant *Chase H.Q.* has appeared in British arcades, and Konami are now looking to launch *Hot Chase* in the new year. In *Hot Chase* you're the chasee rather than the chaser, if you take my meaning, speeding through incredibly detailed and varied landscapes in your sports car, trying to both beat the clock and avoid a plethora of obstacles and enemy helicopters. As you take more and more hits, your windscreen becomes starred with bullet-holes, and if you don't make the end of the course within the time limit, a time bomb blows you and your vehicle sky-high. Just when you thought it was safe to go back onto the roads . . .



Welcome aboard.



Tokyo's hottest arcade.





SUPER CIRCUIT

Undoubtedly one of the shows major talking points was Sega's massive *Super Circuit*, about 100 metres of six foot wide racing track which curved and undulated around their stand. Racing one another around this track were three radio-controlled model cars controlled from three Outrun-style sit-into consoles mounted at one edge of the track. On the monitors of each of these three cabinets, instead of game graphics, was a worm's-eye view of the track, transmitted from a camera mounted in the fore of the cabinet's corresponding model car. The idea was for the three cabinet-ensconced competitors to guide their respective on-track models around the course, racing against one another in real life as well as on screen. The speed at which the cars travel was impressive, and the thrills of really guiding a vehicle round corners, over bumps and into walls attracted an enormous queue of visitors to the stand. Ingenious? Definitely. A video game? Well, not really. Likely to turn up in your local arcade? Not unless it's about the size of a football pitch, and generating considerably more income — the cost of installing the set-up was reputedly in excess of £200,000! Still, if any prosperous seaside arcade owner out there is looking for a really spectacular piece to blow his summer profits on, here it is.

games are in Japan. The capital's largest record shop, Wave, in the snooty Roppongi district, even stocks a wide range of CD compilations of different coin-op soundtracks, nestling amongst Bruce Springsteen and Michael Jackson.

It's appropriate, then, that the most important amusement machines show of the year is staged in Tokyo, drawing manufacturers, distributors, arcade owners and the occasional very lucky journalist from all corners of the globe to the Ryutsu Senta where all the major coin-op companies (bar, for some strange reason, Atari) show off their new games for the forthcoming year.

The show takes place over two days and is reached by a fairly spectacular monorail journey over Tokyo Harbour's dockland. Braving vertigo, jet-lag and the incredible weight of the camera tripod which accompanied me across the world, I paid my fare and squashed into the car alongside what seemed like a quarter of the population of Japan for the trip. I didn't see any visual evidence of those stories about fat men having to be employed to cram everybody into subway cars during my stay, but I certainly can see why they might be needed. Happily, however, Japanese commuters accept the almost unbearable overcrowding with saint-like patience.

Within twenty minutes we're at the entrance to the Centre itself, a large several-storey building. There's a major moment of panic when the smiling lady at the registration counter refuses entry to an Australian visitor because he's neglected to bring his invitation with him — a rapid search of my bags reveals that I'm in the same boat, and that due to the "very strict rule", I may have travelled half-way around the globe to be turned away. Luckily a nice man from Taito comes to my assistence and, a little form-filling later, I'm in.

Just as Wimbledon describes itself at "*The* Tennis Championships", implying that there aren't really any other major tennis tournements anywhere else worthy of comparison, so this year the Japanese Amusement Machinery Manufacturers' Association decided that their annual show (formerly "the JAMMA Show") should henceforth be simply known as *the* "Amusement Machine Show".

And certainly for a first-time visitor from the U.K. the exhibition is about fifty-seven times more sophisticated than any of the trade shows staged back home.

Of the three large and crowded halls, one is almost exclusively given over to what the Amusement industry quaintly calls 'kiddie





ARCADES

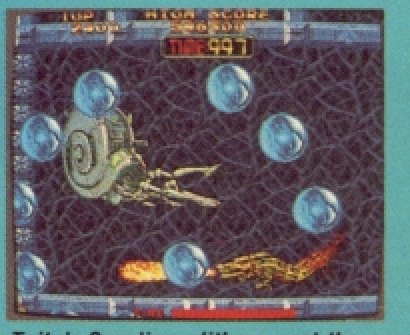
Sizing up Sega's Heavyweight Champ.



Heavy metal guitar player.



PLAYED IN JAPAN




Taito's Syvalion slithers past the opposition.

rides' and novelty products other than video games. While not strictly part of my assignment, I couldn't help spending about an hour wandering among the dazzling array of indoor skiing gadgets, video-generated indoor golf driving ranges and (perhaps most impressive of all) a weird futuristic update on the old player piano idea in which a bizarre metallic robot clutching a real Yamaha acoustic guitar gives renditions of your selected tune!

The other two were filled with impressively large stands representing all the major Japanese video games manufacturers, with literally hundreds of new games on freeplay. Truly an arcade players dream. . .

Last year's show, as Mike wrote at the time, continued the tradition of showing off even more adventurous developments in the dedicated game, with the likes of *Heavyweight Champ* (Sega) and *Final Lap* (Namco) being shown for the first time. This year, however, with a couple of noteworthy exceptions, there were few major new game-playing concepts introduced, leading some commentators to conclude that perhaps the manufacturers had run out of ideas.

But while it's certainly true that most of the big climb-into simulators on display had already been seen in the West, there was one major new development widely in evidence which will certainly change the face of non-dedicated game-playing; this was the year of the 26-inch screen.

Perhaps inspired by the massive developments which Japanese companies have recently made in the area of high-resolution television systems (while I was in Tokyo, Japan's leading electronics show was also taking place, and the first commercially-available high-res TV system was launched; according to its creators within six years every home will have one), several different coin-op companies have developed large-screen monitors, thereby allowing game graphics to

METAL HAWK
NAMCO



With few really innovative dedicated games on show this year, Namco's *Metal Hawk* was a strong contender for dedicated game of the show. Unlike *Thunderblade*, this chopper combat sim doesn't have a straightahead stage, the playing area being viewed from overhead throughout the game. But the multi-directional scrolling, excellent graphics, height control and, of course, realistic hydraulics all combine to make this a thrill a minute. With onscreen arrows directing you towards each stage's ultimate target (enemy camps, power stations and the like), you encounter tanks, fighters, other choppers,



GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
CAPCOM

There's no denying that Capcom have really pulled out all the stops to make their update of that old arcade classic *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* summat a bit special. The storyline's basically the same, the time is three years later, and the graphics and gameplay are enhanced almost beyond recognition. Our hero still runs and jumps with his peculiarly nervous gait, but the range of obstacles, enemies and backgrounds he encounters in his quest to resuce the fair maiden is staggering, with moving stages, wind and rain and a whole host of other factors colouring and affecting his journey. Of the various PCB games on display this was almost certainly the most popu-

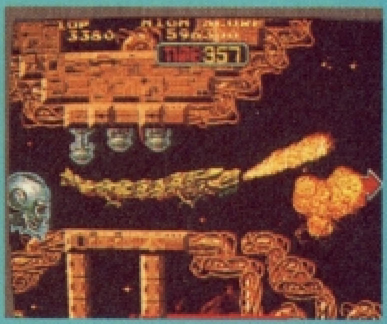
麻雀殺人事件





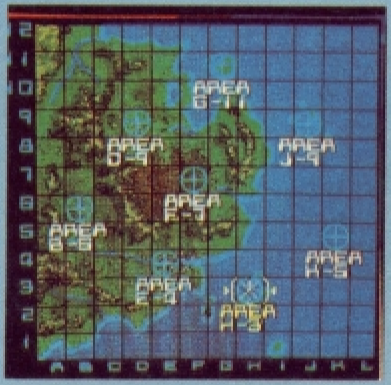
Strip Mah Jong — ***barely acceptable.***







warships and enormous flying fortresses and try to blast them from the heavens. The effect of the multi-directional scrolling is to make *Metal Hawk* just as quick and disorientating as *Thunderblade*, though in quite a different way. Assuming it makes it across the waters, it'll surely be assaulting your pockets over the coming months.







lar, at least if the crowds thronging the Capcom stand were anything to go by. It was only by subterfuge, deceit and good ol' fashioned pushiness that I managed to get on the game at all. Expect similar difficulties when *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is released in these parts.

be represented in far greater detail. The results were fairly spectacular even with games originally developed with smaller-screen monitors in mind, so one can only guess at what difference this innovation will make to the appearance of brand new games, written specifically for the systems. Jaleco, Capcom and Tecmo were all displaying their own 26" monitor cabinets and almost every other company was using them for their games displays, so this clearly represents the shape (and size) of things to come.

As regards the games themeselves, well, there were plenty of average ones, some excellent ones, a few sure-fire hits plus some enigmas. Let's take it stand by stand.

CAPCOM: Their fairly large stand was almost entirely dedicated to displaying their two major new products on their own specially-developed 26" CP-System monitors. The games in question are their tremendous update on the old *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* of a couple of years back which was exclusively previewed to CU readers a couple of months ago, named *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, and an equally fascinating new product called *Falcon*, featuring an unsually acrobatic futuristic warrior having to cope with gravity in the most realistic way I've ever seen on a coin-op as he slips and stumbles, swings and jumps his way through a wide variety of dinosaur- and robot-ridden landscapes.

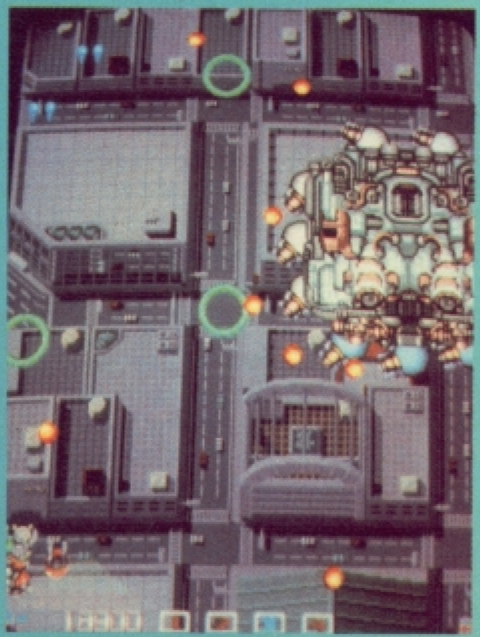
DATA EAST: Data East's biggest coin-op launch this year will be their conversion of *Robocop*, and very impressive it looks too. *Robocop* is a graphically-excellent beat-cum-shoot 'em up starring the menancingly charming Robocop "clearing-up" increasingly violent and desperate denizens of various of the city's seedier patches. Their other newie, the luridly-named *Bloody Wolf* is a competent but not mind-bogglingly original Commando-update, featuring land and water-based hand-to-hand combat with a variety of weapons. However, the presence of various different items to pick up adds some strategic elements to this fairly well-worn concept and may increase its endurance.

IREM: Strangely enough, Irem weren't showing their recently site-tested and very wonderful *Spirit Ninja*. In fact the only product of note they were showing was a rather neat shoot 'em up called *Image Fight*, a progressive vertical-scroller in which you take on a wide range of impressive spacecraft picking up various extra pod guns along the way. Though in appearance quite different to *R-Type*, the size of some of the "boss" ships and the slick weapon build-up did hark back to the best moments of Irem's greatest hit to date. Of course, lots of other companies have been producing slick progressive shoot 'em ups over the last couple of years, so *Image Fight*'s hardly likely to create the same stir as *R-Type* did, but it's still well worth checking out.

JALECO: Apart from their impressive 26" cabinets, Jaleco's major offerings were a reasonably nice-looking oriental beat 'em up involving some rather porcine Ninjas (unfortunately, no English translation of the name was available) and an arm-wrestling game called *Arm Champs*. The latter was

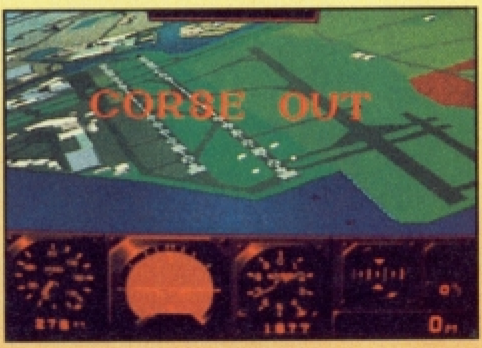


Konami's Final Round *— beat that!*



Irem's Image Fight *— a blast from the future.*

PLAYED IN JAPAN



Taito's **Top Landing** *cruises in.*





attracting lots of interest, with its huge console complete with extended hand for you to clutch onto, but with the only video element being a selection of faces onscreen which changed expression depending on how well or badly the contest was going, this perhaps doesn't come under the heading "video game" at all. Well, one thing's for sure, anyway: you won't be seeing a home conversion of this appearing over the next year!

KONAMI: After some years languishing in the doldrums, Konami have come back with a vengence in recent months, and they boasted several good new titles in their large stand. Most prominent was *Hot Chase* and there's also a boxing sim, *The Final Round*, which puts you through realistic training routines as well as eight rounds of increasingly tough opponents. But for my money the best of the lot was their latest progressive shoot 'em up, *Thunder Cross*. For one or two players, this blastalong allows you to acquire up to four weapon pods and a rich array of weaponry as you shoot your way through some dramatic landscapes. All in all, Konami have plenty to be proud of.

NAMCO: A fairly mixed stand, this. Two of their three new games were pretty average PCBs; a cutsey shoot 'em up named *Ordyne* and a grisly beat 'em up appropriately called *Splatterhouse*. But Namco also unveiled a really first class dedicated helicopter sim, *Metal Hawk*. Comparisons with *Thunderblade*, I suppose, will inevitably be made, but don't let that put you off. This one is worth a play or ten.

NICHIBUTSU: The boys responsible for many of the various Strip Mah Jong games that the Japanese seem so fond of, their stall was mostly taken up with variations on this rather adolescent theme. Their programmers did manage to switch out of lavatorial mode for sufficiently long to dream up *Crazy Climber 2*, a game curiously reminiscent of that oldie but goldie *Crazy Kong*, in which you have to manouvre your small climbing hero up a succession of skyscrapers, all the time avoiding being dislodged by brick-throwing giant gorillas, cranes and the like.

SEGA: As you might expect, the biggest and most crowded stand in the show. Despite the incredible *Super Circuit* 'motorway' surrounding the stand, on which three radio-controlled model cars raced each other guided from sit-in consoles, really there wasn't much on show which CU readers won't already have seen or, at least, read about. *Galaxy Force*, *Thunderblade*, *Heavyweight Champ* and *Power Drift* were all being featured, together with various PCBs (including a fairly standard aerial shoot 'em up, *Scramble Spirit*, and a baseball game called *Excite League*) but really Sega didn't have too many surprises in terms of new games. Not that their stand wasn't popular — it was, hugely so — but they didn't quite live up to their well-earned reputation of being the most innovative coin-op manufacturer around.

SNK: Another fairly ordinary stand, the main focus of attention being their military beat 'em up *P.O.W.*, apparantly selling in huge numbers in these parts. They were also showing a golfing game called *Country Club* and *Touchdown Fever* which is, surprise, surprise, an American football game.

TAITO: A good display from the consistently excellent Taito included the brilliant *Chase H. Q.*, the strange *Syvalion* in which you guide your serpent hero through a maze of baddies using a rollerball, *Record Breaker*, the very cutesy *New Zealand Story* in which you play a little kiwi out to rescue your mates from the clutches of a walrus, a vertically-scrolling progressive shoot 'em up called *Truxton*, and a very much improved update on their *Midnight Landing* flight simulator of a couple of years back called *Top Landing*. Once again, there weren't very many earth-shattering new developments, but all in all, quite a selection of quality coin-ops.

TATSUMI: The only offering of note from Tatsumi whose *Afterburner* clone *Gray Out* failed to appear last year was another chopper-based shoot 'em up, *Apache 3*, which echoed *Thunderblade* a little too closely to be of any real interest.

TECMO: Aside from their aforementioned version of the 26" cabinet, Tecmo had little of interest for the video game enthusiast, preferring, it seems, to concentrate their energies on various items of coin-op related hardware.

Overall game of the show? Well, with no new mega game obviously standing head and shoulders above the rest, an outright victor would be difficult to name, but judging by the numbers of younger games fanatics swarming around these particular games, I'd hazard a guess that the ones to look out for will be Capcom's *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* and *Falcon*, Konami's *Thunder Cross*, *Chase H.Q.* from Taito, Data East's *Robocop* and Namco's *Metal Hawk*, with Sega's *Power Drift* picking up the most votes among the *Outrun*-addicts, and Taito's *Top Landing* a smash with the more cerebral games enthusiasts.

The one glaring absentee from the show, Atari, might well have new games to rival any of those on display here; no doubt the American Show, held in Chicago this month, will see the launch of some exciting new products from the on-form American arcade house.

But the overall message coming from the show does seem to be that the engineers and hydraulics experts have, for the present at least, run out of new ideas for bone-shuddering simulator-type games; and that instead we're going to find more efforts being directed at getting the best graphics, sounds and game concepts possible onto the new 26" monitor systems which look set to become the norm. And if they succeed in exciting us as much with their new generation of non-dedicated games over the next twelve months as they did with their *Afterburners* and *Thunderblades* over the previous year, well I for one won't be complaining. And nor, I'm sure, will the various UK software houses who've been battling to try and squeeze all the thrills of rollercoaster coin-ops onto the home systems since *Outrun* first left the competition behind in a cloud of dust and the stench of burning rubber.

WIN A TASTE OF JAPAN!



Well, no, the Ed hasn't offered to fly a couple of you out to Tokyo, but we have got the next best thing — a stack of Oriental games goodies for five of you lucky peoples to be winning. We've got a stack of game soundtrack CDs, featuring sounds from the greatest arcade hits ever produced by the likes of Sega, Capcom, Konami and Data East, a couple of posters, badges, some dinky little hand-held video games and a couple of thingies for putting under your page when writing.

To win a selection of these treats just tell us the name of the traditional Japanese dish which features raw fish wrapped in seaweed, and of the rice 'wine', usually served piping hot, used to wash said dish down.

Entries on a slice of beef terriyaki to Japan Compo, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. First five names out of the cloth cap score the goodies.

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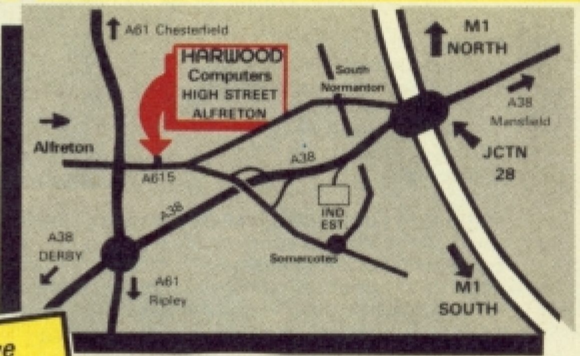
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IBM PC
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INTO THE

CU's courtly adventure writer Keith Campbell takes on the mantle of Level 9's *Lancelot* this month, and then displays his chivalry by answering the plaintive cries of lost souls. Whataguy!

CAMPBELL'S COMMENT

So you thought the 18 Certificate slapped on *Jack The Ripper* was just a commercial gimmick? They don't think that way in Sweden, as Patrik Grundström reports:

★ Did you know that *Wolfman* and *Jack The Ripper* have been banned in Sweden? Lucky I bought my copy in London when I was there on vacation. I've played *Jack The Ripper* at a friend's place, and it was horrible! Not that I was disturbed by the gory text and pictures, but the game itself. Rod Pike should have done it! *JTR* is so messy, and you can't understand anything in it.

Dracula is the best adventure I've played for a long time, and if you should meet Rod, say hello from me and tell him that I'm eagerly awaiting his next adventure.

Campbell's Comment: I did just that, Patrik, and Rod says he has a super idea for his next game, but wouldn't let on what it is! Don't get too excited, though, as it will be quite a while yet before it is finished. Meanwhile, he gave me some clues to help you where you're stuck in *Wolfman* — have a look in the Clues Section.

What level of support do you think software publishers should give their customers, and how much should they pay for it? Level 9 offer comprehensive clue sheets to anybody requesting one with proof of purchase, Rainbird offer a telephone and mail help service. Infocom have been building clues into their adventures, recently, but otherwise offer 'Invisiclues' — at a price. Mr Turnbull of Gateshead has some definite views:

★ I have been toiling away at one particular game entitled *Bard's Tale I* without much success, so I decided to write to Electronic Arts for some hints. After about one week I received a reply which stated that a Hint/Clue Book was available at a price of £5, P&P FREE. I think this leans to the extortion side, because as the game cost me £9.99 I think it is a bit much to ask half the buying price for a few hints.

Campbell's Comment: If a small family firm like Level 9 can do it, so can the giant Electronic Arts! I agree with you that the bona fide purchaser should be able to get basic help from the publisher at a nominal cost — a stamped addressed envelope. I would mention, though, that the *Bard's Tale* hint book is a fairly substantial and well-produced booklet.

Did you think, like me, that *Lord Of The Rings* and *Shadows Of Mordor* were pretty abysmal games? Michael Walsh, of Horsham in Victoria, has thrown some light on why they should have turned out that way. He sent a copy of an interview with the games' creators published in Australian Commodore and Amiga Review, and written by Michael Spiteri. Here are some memorable quotes from the Beam Software team:

Paul Kidd, Storyline developer:
"I loathe adventures."
John Harwood, Project Leader:
"It's amazing how you can make a program crash when you abuse it."
Norton Truter, Programmer:
"I didn't get to use it [a 64] much until before I came here."

Michael adds: "They say the parser is always a problem and that you can never account for every single way it will work, but I have at least 100 hours on Infocom games and I have never crunched one, found something illogical, or seen a single spelling mistake. Apart from *Leather Goddesses* it has never rejected an input that I expected it to understand."

Campbell's Comment: The difference is, Infocom know exactly what they're about. What would you expect from a team whose storyteller hates the product he is producing, whose programmer has little or no experience of one of his main target machines, and whose leader has no faith in the viability of his game system? Oh, and by the way, exactly WHAT were you trying to do to that yak, Michael?



VALLEY RESCUE

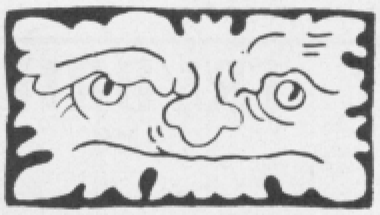
Frankie Kelly of Newbridge in County Kildare has got stuck just one step ahead of Peter Noack, in *Shard Of Inovar*. To get the amulet of fire, he says, you must place the statuette of Vulcat in the font behind the Temple of Sunquat. You'll then fall asleep, after which you can get the amulet without being burned. But what next, asks Frankie?

The hermit just sits there looking out of the window of his hut, after rescuing Wolfman from a bear trap. Michael Redfern of Sheffield just knows that the hermit should be telling him something about Nardia, but how can he make him?

Mario D'Atri of Buttrio in Italy, knows all about the fruits in Part 3 of *Frankenstein*, and wrote to put Olav Bjoernbakken out of his misery (see clues). But Mario hasn't been able to enter the shed, the village, or the dwelling. Is this a vocabulary problem, or is it something more sinister?

Rigel's Revenge is a budget

E VALLEY



game from Mastertronic, that just never leaves the Valley mail. To help people who may have missed earlier clues, I include a couple for the more popular problems in the game. Don't lose them, Amiga owners, Rigel will be coming your way soon!

There's a riddle in *Bard's Tale I* that starts: "Past warscapes fought by men . . ." Lars Nilsson of Frederikstad in Norway, is seeking the answer, and the secret of how to enter Manger's Tower without getting thrown out by the guardian.

It's all happening in Norway this month! But not for Olav Langeland — it would be his wedding night, but he can't afford any wine! Will anyone stand him a bottle or two — he's playing *Leisure Suit Larry*!

Leaving Norway, we now head for Poland (this is beginning to read like a package tour!) Remember I asked recently for C-64 owners interested in corresponding with Krzysztof Struszczak, of Lodz? Returning from a camping holiday in Spain during the summer, Krzysztof became an Amiga owner! He explains:

"I was coming back to Poland via West Germany, and entered a computer shop to buy a 128D — but it turned out that an Amiga was cheaper! It was a difficult decision, because buying Amiga means selling my 64 and breaking all 64 contacts."

Buying an Amiga in West Germany has its snags, for although he understands English, Krzysztof does not understand German! Is there anyone with an English language Amiga manual going spare? And is there any Amiga owner who would like to correspond with Krzysztof? Write to me at The Valley if you can help.

Enda Barrett of Tralee is having breakfast time trouble! Who knows how to open the trapdoor in the ceiling, and what use is the poster? All this is in *Quest For The Golden Eggcup*, where, says Enda, the perfect place to store things is God's Dungeon — it's so easy to get into and out of!

How do you get into Part 3 of *Wolfman* before completing Part 2? "Easy!" says Patrik Grundström of Malmö in Sweden, "I loaded a game file from Part 2 in Part 3, and there stood the password!" But that's cheating, Patrik! "Well," comments Patrik, "everything is allowed in love, war, and adventures . . ."

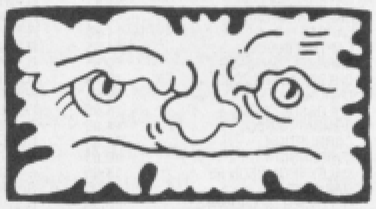
ADVENTURE CLUES

KENTILLA:
To kill the ward of disintegration, say SAGAGOO to activate the staff, and hit him with it!

QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP:
To get out of God's dungeon, remember the programmers!

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
Pull it, pull it hard, press twice, and bend it up!

WOLFMAN:
To lift the flagstone, look at the moon!
To kill one guard, creep up on him from the north. To kill the others, discover the name of the owner of the armour, wear it, and masquerade as the owner.





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INTO THE VALLEY





LANCELOT

Mandarin Software/ Level 9
Amiga: £19.95
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This is a tale of the Knights Of The Round Table, as enacted by that chivalrous knight, Sir Lancelot. Considerable research by Pete Austin of Level 9 has resulted in an adventure with authentic atmosphere, and faithful to the original Arthurian Legend.

The story starts as Lancelot journeys towards Camelot, and is challenged by a knight who will not let him pass across a stream. The ensuing battle leads to the knighting of Lancelot, whereupon he is given a quest by King Arthur. He must travel to Logris, and set free Arthur's knights who are held there.

Without further ado, Lancelot sets forth, and being chivalrous, he frequently spares the lives of those who would seek to kill him with trickery. From the Orkneys to Cornwall he travels in search of the missing knights, and before long, earns himself an aide in the form of the Red Knight, and the constant company of the damsel Maledisant, a rather sour-mouthed character, who is always quick to belittle him.

His aide, the Red Knight, although willing, tends to return from every task he is set with the words: "Some of your requests could not be completed." Further investigation into the degree of success enjoyed by the Red Knight, leads to the conclusion that he didn't even try.

In this adventure, you can command people to do things, and off they will go — usually to return with the job complete. You can also FIND and GO TO places and things, and the program will automatically take you there, providing that no obstacle, such as a belligerent knight, stands in your way. Whilst travelling to your destination, unless RUN TO is used instead of GO TO, details of the places you pass through are displayed, and so, later, you can GO TO any of them you think may prove interesting.

There are some difficult puzzles, as well as some fairly easy ones. Rescuing Sir Meliot, for example, is no great feat, provided you are prepared to take risks. But the men imprisoned in Sir Turquin's manor are not so easy to free. Step onto a loose plank on your way into the manor, and you have the choice of stepping back, or tumbling into an apparently exitless pit where the men are imprisoned.

A turret in the Orkneys proves troublesome, too. As soon as you approach, the guard signals to someone to lower the portcullis, and is then able to prevent your entry for as long as it takes it to fully close.

The ability to command other characters therefore makes for some interesting and realistic strategies. Should you tell the Red Knight to go to the turret, and attack the guard, then follow whilst he is engaged in battle? Or perhaps, to get the timing right, you should tell the Red Knight to wait, and then go and attack the guard, so that you can approach simultaneously, entering your command during the Red Knight's WAIT period. There are many combinations of moves that can be tried in this way.

In keeping with Level 9's current format, there are three parts to the program, which are seperate loads on the text-only cassette version. Two parts, set in Camelot and Logris, are almost invisible as separate parts on disk versions, and precede the third part which takes place after all of Arthur's knights have been freed. Here your task is to obtain the Holy Grail.

Unfortunately, the performance of the program leaves a lot to be desired. On many occasions, text entirely out of context with the current situation appears in the replies. What is perhaps more annoying, is the non-recognition of words and commands that are reasonable in pursuit of the solution to a problem. A case in point is a river whose water cannot be seen when examined, but from which a chalice can be filled with water. A group of priests are described as "... drinking from the stream ..." yet the chalice of water turns out to be salty.

All in all, it's a cracking good story, and well thought out in its presentation as an adventure, yet spoiled by lack of anticipation of players' likely commands, and a few minor text bugs that sometimes give confusing replies.

64 UPDATE

Play *Lancelot* on a 64, and you'll get exactly the same text and puzzles, but the adventure will take longer to play if you want to see the pictures. This is due to the slower picture loading on a 64, coupled with the extra load on the processor to maintain a split screen.

The adventure comes on a double sided disk, and once the game starts, the disk is flipped over to access the pictures. But these are not replicas of the original 16-bit graphics — often they are complete redraws, showing the scene from a different aspect. All are considerably simplified, showing less detail and subtlety of colour and shade than is possible on a 64, given a lot of loving care.

GRAPHICS (Amiga)	8
PUZZLEABILITY	8
PLAYABILITY	7
OVERALL	8

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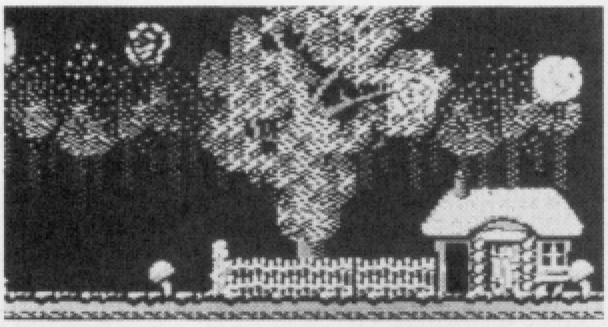
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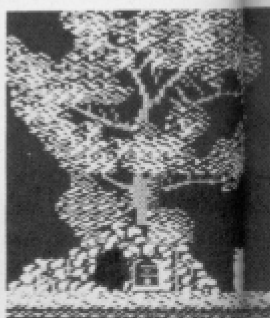
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

Many people have been complaining (especially to John Cummings, the programmer) about the difficult first level of Soldier of Fortune. Well, to give you a good start, John has provided some hints and tips, while we took some pictures . . .

IN THE BEGINNING

Run and jump over the small toadstool and enter the cottage (1). After the message you are magically transported to Central Park.

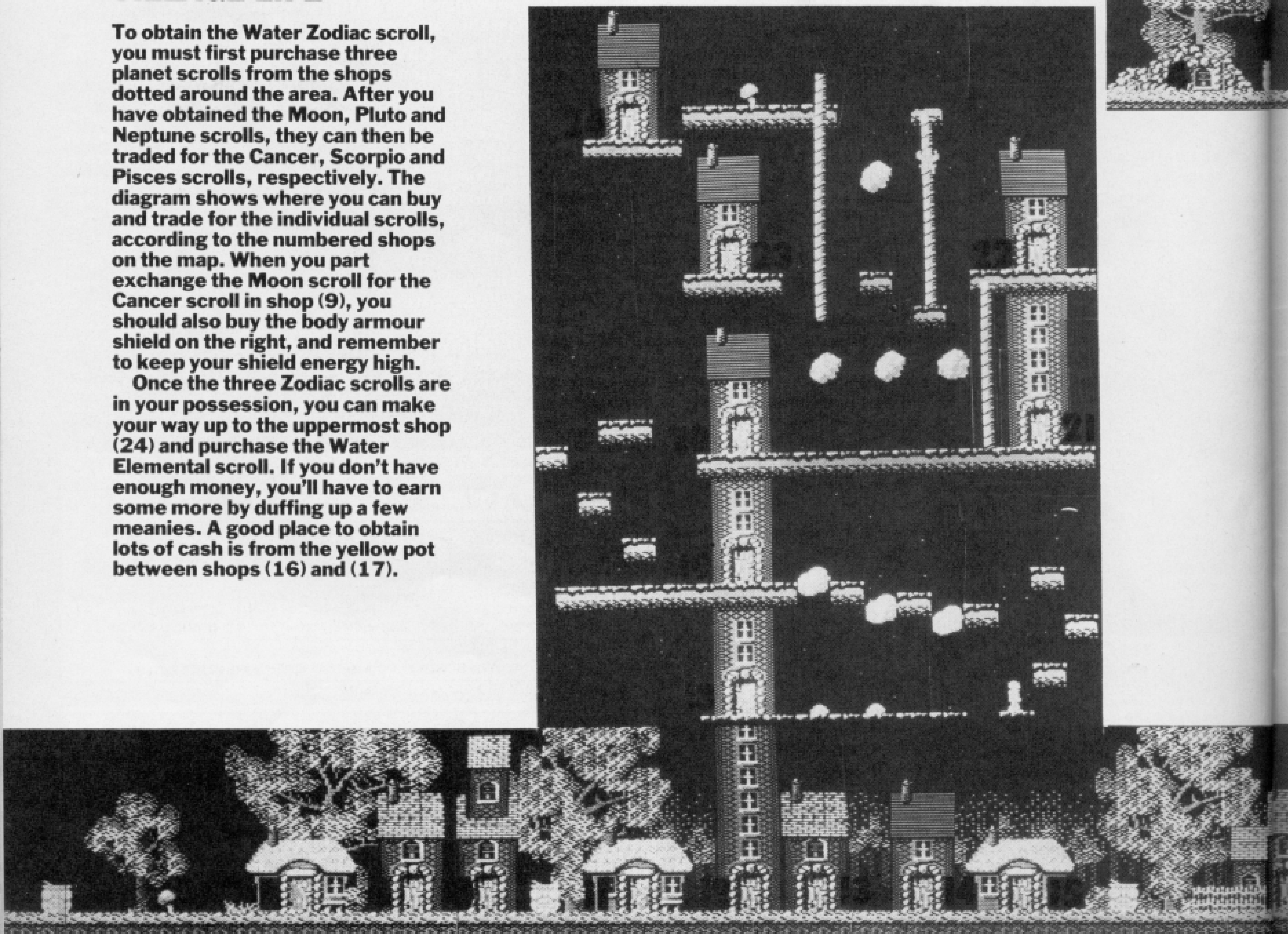




VILLAGE LIFE

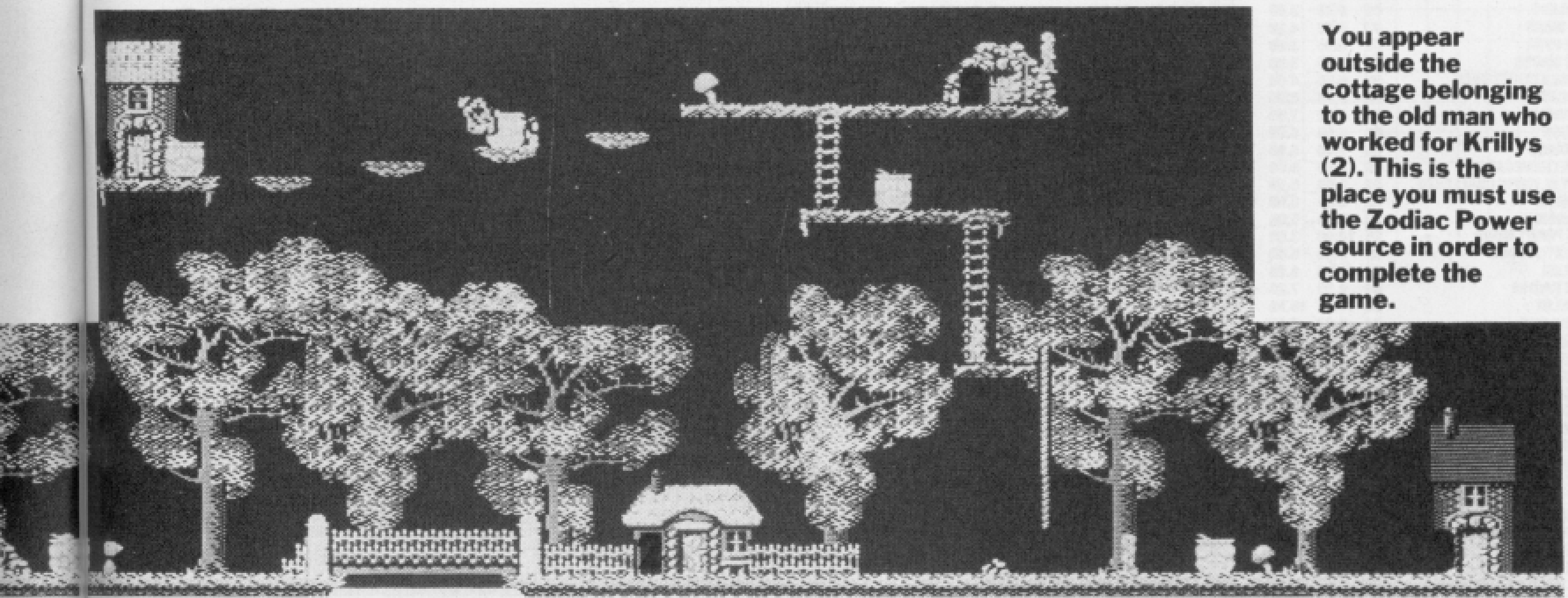
To obtain the Water Zodiac scroll, you must first purchase three planet scrolls from the shops dotted around the area. After you have obtained the Moon, Pluto and Neptune scrolls, they can then be traded for the Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces scrolls, respectively. The diagram shows where you can buy and trade for the individual scrolls, according to the numbered shops on the map. When you part exchange the Moon scroll for the Cancer scroll in shop (9), you should also buy the body armour shield on the right, and remember to keep your shield energy high.

Once the three Zodiac scrolls are in your possession, you can make your way up to the uppermost shop (24) and purchase the Water Elemental scroll. If you don't have enough money, you'll have to earn some more by duffing up a few meanies. A good place to obtain lots of cash is from the yellow pot between shops (16) and (17).



PLAY TO WIN

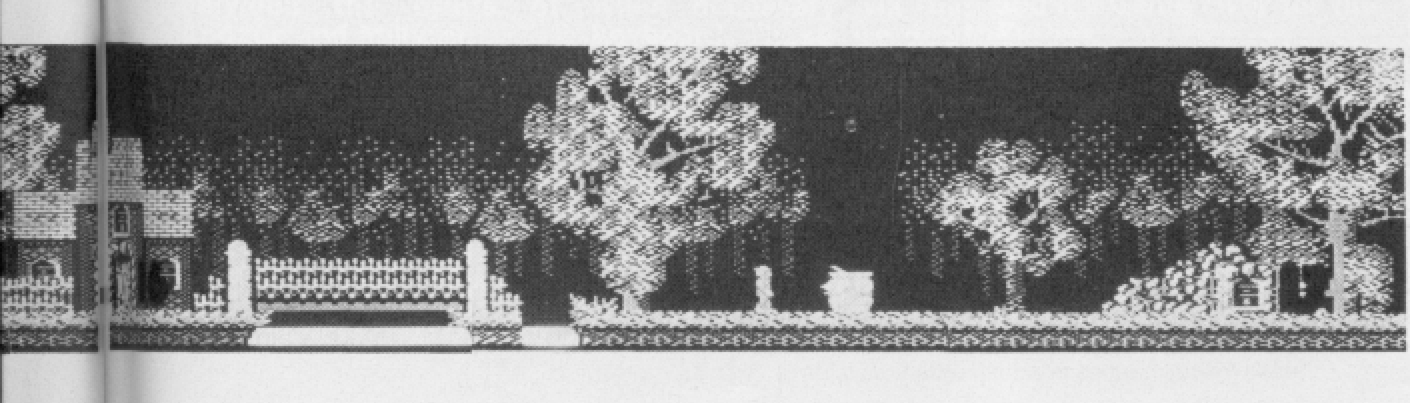
CENTRAL PARK



You appear outside the cottage belonging to the old man who worked for Krillys (2). This is the place you must use the Zodiac Power source in order to complete the game.

On entering the cottage you will be offered two different weapons and an extra life. It's best to buy an extra life and the spinner weapon (the one on the left).
The other four doorways give access to the area where the four Zodiac scrolls are to be found:
Doorway 3 — Water Zodiac scroll area, Doorway 4 — Air Zodiac scroll area, Doorway 5 — Earth Zodiac scroll area, Doorway 6 — Fire Zodiac scroll area.
Doorways 4, 5 and 6 are magically locked, and can only be opened when you are in possession of the correct Zodiac scroll. The water scroll obtained in the region beyond doorway 3 will unlock doorways 4 and 5. However, it's best to attempt the fourth region after completing the third.

Beware you don't run into a pot which has its eyes open as this causes instant death.
The yellow pots don't get bored and open their eyes, and when shot they generate a coin worth 50 pieces.
The other two pots are more dangerous (red and cyan), as both can grow bored. When they do, their eyes open and a nasty wraith or valuable coin is ejected.
You must learn to cope with the attacking wraiths, since a lot of money can be gathered around the pots. The best course of action is to stand very close. If a wraith or monster appears allow it to pass overhead and then blast it when it comes down to your level. This requires a fair amount of skill, so keep trying — it's well worth the extra effort.
It is very important to look after your shield and weapon energy. Only fire weapons when there is a good chance that your shot will hit the target; don't waste bullets.
Keep yourself well protected by buying new and more powerful shields. The least powerful shield is the gloves. These can only take two hits when they are fully charged. It's best to obtain more protective shields as soon as possible — like the helmet or the body armour.
Weapons are mainly a matter of personal choice, but the most effective when first playing the game are the sword and the spinner; both are fast and easy to use. Different weapons can be bought at a variety of shops, so it may be wise to shop around before condemning any cash, especially on the later levels.
The longer you remain in a single level the more difficult it becomes. Also, the price of objects increase with time, so you must work fast to complete the levels (hopefully, these tips should allow you to do just that!)



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PLAY TO WIN

STARGLIDER 2

Jez San and the Argonauts' latest game has been around for a couple of weeks now, so we thought it was about time we did a few tips . . .

As Amiga owners already know, the main objective in the game is to travel between the planets of the Solician system in order to collect, steal or trade for nine items which the Apogeean technicians require to build a neutron bomb. The resultant weapon is then used to annihilate the Egron beam weapon under construction in orbit around Q-Beta.

The accompanying layout of the system shows where all of these objects can be obtained, and by which methods. However, the real trick is to keep the Icarus (and its humanoid cargo) in one piece long enough to halt the Egron's plans once and for all (or at least until *Starglider III*!)

REFUELLING:

The main priority is keeping the Icarus' energy banks topped up, and there are four main ways of doing this. The first, and to my mind the most effective way, is to locate the powerlines on Apogee or Vista, and fly along their length just above the tops of the towers. This doesn't take long and isn't too dangerous; if you do happen to collide with a pylon, pull up and fly into space. On your return, the powerline will have been repaired.

If you happen to find yourself in a spot of lumber in deep space, the next best method of re-fuelling is by grabbing asteroids in the Icarus' tractor beam. Asteroids are reasonably abundant, and there's an energy-rich asteroid field between the orbits of Apogee and Millway.

Re-fuelling from volcanic gases is tricky and time consuming. It's also easy to get a boulder up your exhaust while hovering above the erupting crater.

The most spectacular method of obtaining energy is by sun-skimming. Unfortunately, it's also the most dangerous and least forgiving; the slightest loss of concentration sees the display come slithering down the screen as the Icarus begins to melt.

PROTECTION:

Right. so you can keep the Icarus fuelled up. What's the best method of protecting yourself? Well, the standard laser is pretty effective against most things, but some practice is required to target moving objects — especially flying craft, such as pirate vessels. The delay between firing and the laser bolts reaching the target point means that you have to 'lead' the prospective wreck in order to account for the second or two delay. Pirate ships make good target practice — and their breached cargo holds can be particularly fruitful.

WEAPONS:

Fire and Flee missiles can also be used against Egron craft and these are available from the technical depots on Millway's moons (see map) at location 55-04. These are simply collected using the tractor beam and selected when necessary via the keyboard. These are dead useful, since they home in on craft, leaving you free to blast away at any other aggressors.

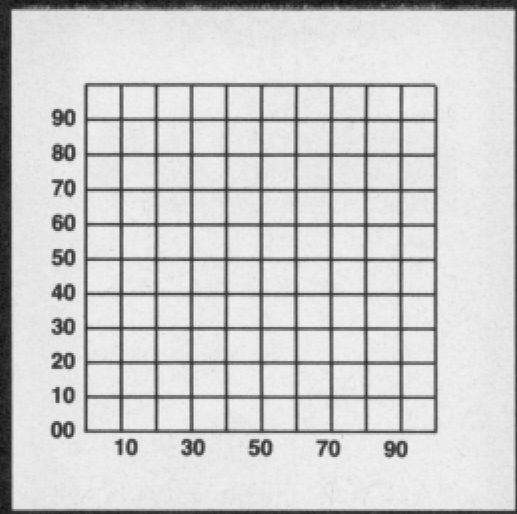
There are also time cubes — a special weapon which traps the opposing craft in time, sending it back a couple of seconds where it disappears up the behind of itself, moments later (if you get the idea . . .) These are obtained from Professor Taymar, under duress: capture the Emma-2 in the tractor beam — and wait.

If the Icarus has been damaged, the technicians on Wackfunk (depot 55-04) will repair it in exchange for any non-specific goods.

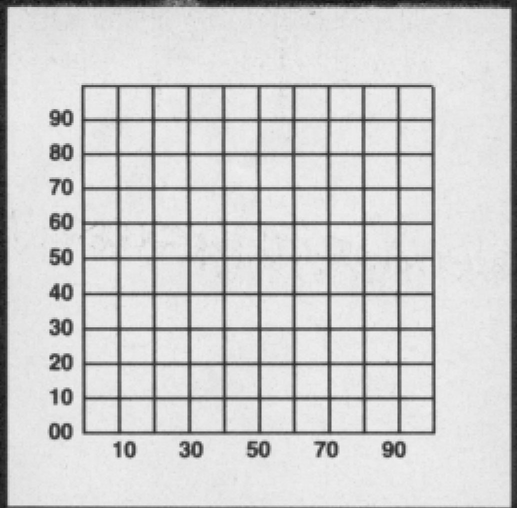
As the Egron's main beam weapon is being constructed around Q-Beta, they are also building a defensive weapon on each of Millway's moons. As long as one of these is inactive, the final attack on the Egron space platform can take place. The defence weapons are destroyed by blasting them with a bouncing bomb, in true dambusters fashion. The bombs are available from the technical depots on Castron, and are collected in the same way as Fire and Flee missiles.

Once all the 'ingredients' have been taken to the technicians on Apogee, the neutron bomb is constructed. The final blow cannot be delivered to the space platform until its six sentinels are each despatched using Fire and Flee missiles; obviously this necessitates a return trip to the nearest Millwayan moon for a refill. Once the sentinels are despatched, the neutron bomb can be launched — and it's Game Over for the Egrons.

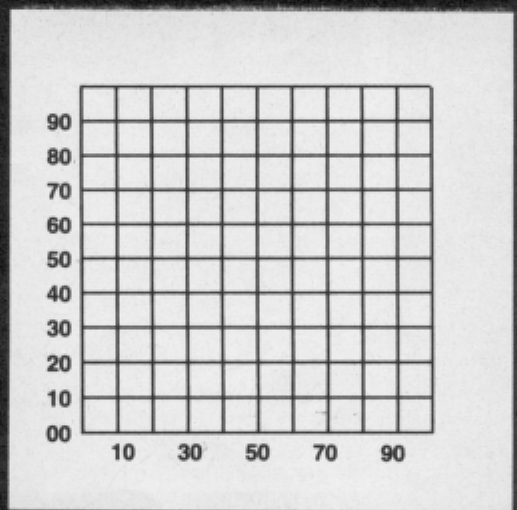
CASTRON TUNNEL SYSTEM



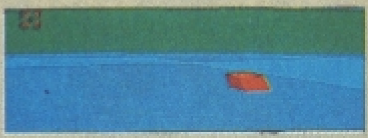
APOGEE TUNNEL SYSTEM



MILLWAY MOON SYSTEM



CRATE OF CASTROBARS



Occasionally found on Vista. Again, they can be obtained from pirate ships, or traded for on Castron (depot at 66-00) for a petrified tree.

PETRIFIED TREES



Loads of 'em on the surface of Enos.

DANTE

CLUSTER OF NODULES



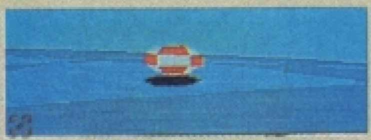
Found on Dante. If you can catch a mechanical duck, you could always swap it for some nodules on Synapse.

VISTA

ENOS

APOGEE

BOUNCING BALL



Escaped Amiga-demo beastie — easily trapped on the surface of Vista.

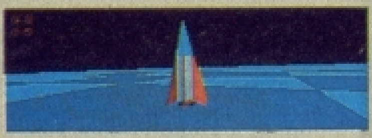
CASTRON

ASTEROIDS



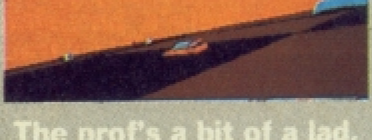
If anything, these are difficult to avoid: present in great numbers in the asteroid belt, and occasionally present around planets and moons.

EGRON MINI-ROCKET



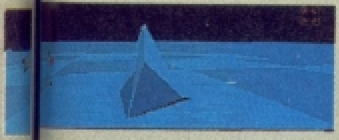
These are found dotted around the surface of Castron and Aldos.

PROFESSOR TAYMAR



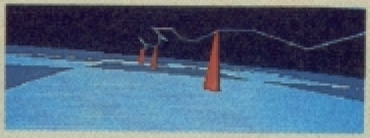
The prof's a bit of a lad. In his spare time, he whiles away the hours by belting across the surface of Broadway in an Emma-2 hovercar. Bit tricky to get a bead on these — it's just a matter of practice and patience.

PYRAMID



E... V... ...y: pick them up on ...da or Enos.

POWERLINES



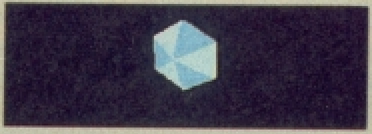
Handy refuelling devices these. Go to Apogee or Vista and they are pretty easy to track down — well, they're big enough, anyway.

CASK OF VISTAN WINE



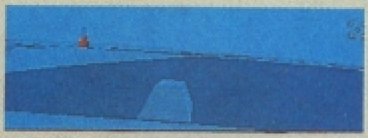
Vistan plonk is collected from pirate ships, or exchanged for a bouncing ball on Castron.

FLAT DIAMOND



Haven't managed to track these down so easily; there are probably some floating about somewhere. Best idea is to collect a space whale and trade it for a diamond on Questa.

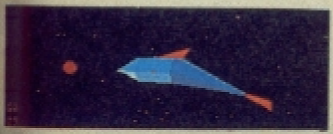
CASE OF NUCLEAR FUEL



Found on Aldos. They can also be 'stolen' from the floating wreckage of freshly blasted pirate ships.

MILLWAY

EGRON MECHANICAL WHALE



These enormous beasts are to be found swimming through the upper atmosphere of Millway, and they are also to be found above the surface of Aldos.

EGRON MECHANICAL DUCK



Usually found 'swimming' amongst the whales.

EGRON BASE

Q-BETA

ALDOS

LUMP OF MINERAL ROCK



There are plenty of these on Q-Beta. In the unlikely event that you want to make life difficult for yourself, they can be traded for on Apex, in return for a pyramid.

CYBERNOID

The large brown patchwork quilt on the right is, in fact, the last level of *Cybernoid*. As you can see, it's a bit big, so we though you might need some help in completing it (the first three levels aren't too bad). Used in conjunction with the Cheat Card for the Amiga version of the game, 16-bitters, should they wish to cheat, can finish it with relatively little difficulty.

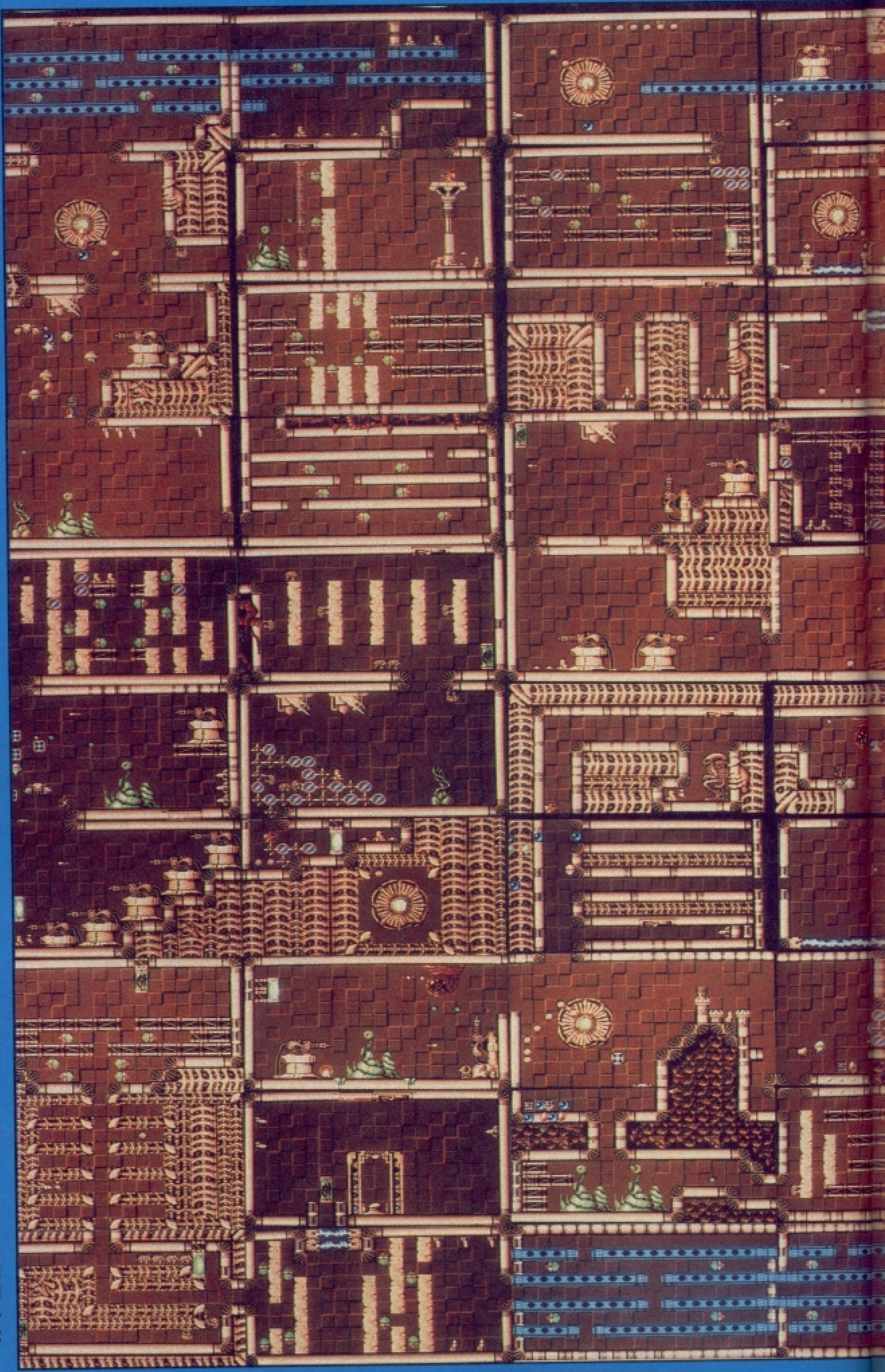
The letters on the map refer to teleports and their corresponding exits. A goes to A and so forth. There are two routes to the end screen: a long one and a short (ish) one. To finish the game quickly, go via teleports A, B and then C. Then on the next stage, use teleport D to go straight to the final screen. The long route goes via teleports A, B, C, E, F, G and H. Obviously, you'll have to use the map to avoid getting trapped in a dead end.

Although it looks like you can enter the final screen from the fifth stage, the electric barriers are fatal — even with shields on. Also, don't be clever and try to leave the last screen using the exit at the bottom. You simply become trapped in the barriers and die repeatedly until the game ends.

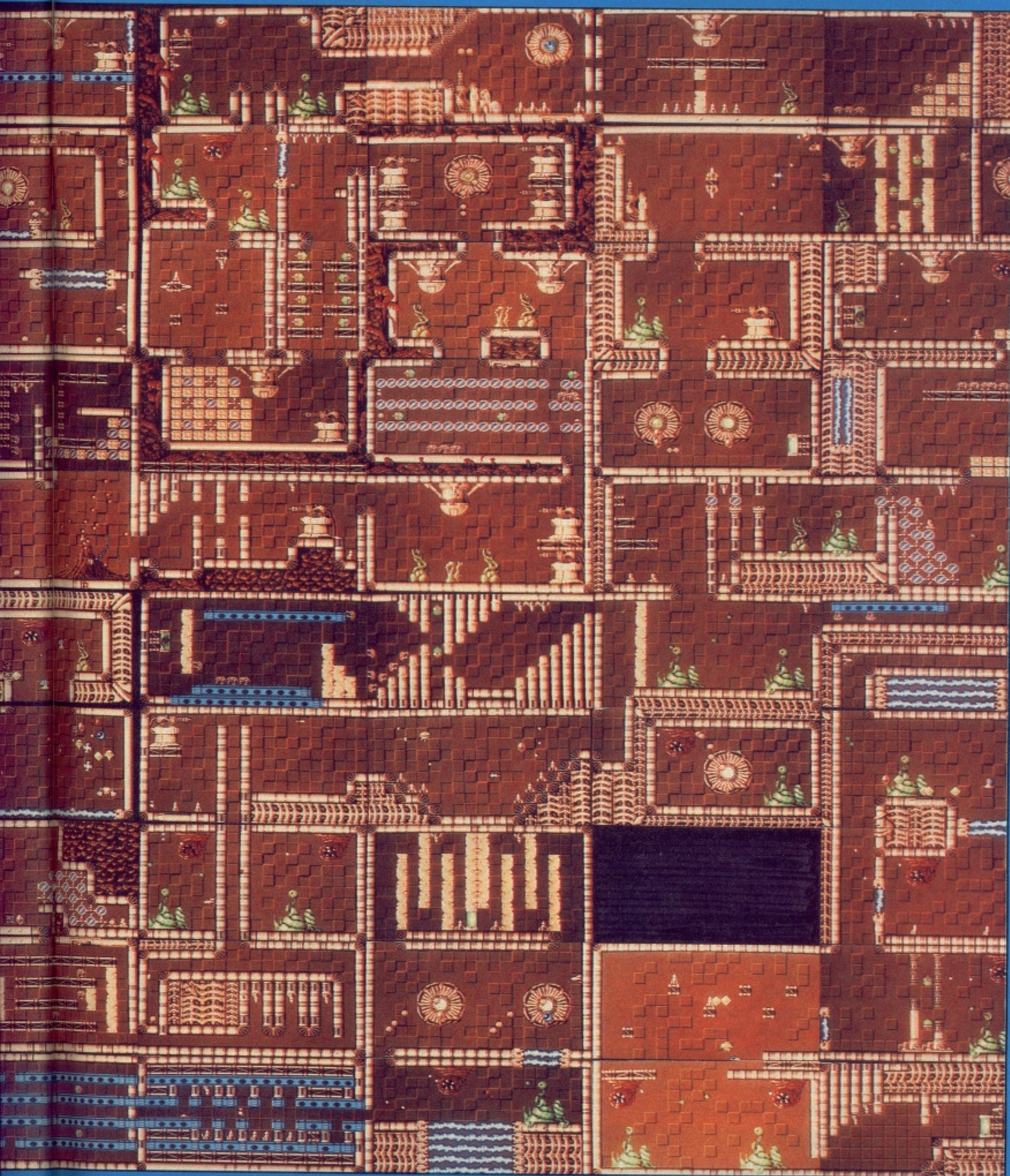
GENERAL HINTS

If you're a terribly good sport and prefer leaving the cheat until you're more desperate, here are some rough and ready tips:

- **Mines are utterly useless — don't bother with them.**
- **Always collect as many jewels as possible before leaving a screen, but don't take too many risks: if you lose a life in the process, there's no point in collecting them in the first place.**
- **Although there's a definite urge to use shields on the small, scurrying creatures, these can often be avoided with little difficulty — especially on the earlier levels.**
- **Green vegetable pods and the brown-toothed objects always cause difficulties. These are best dealt with using Seeker Missiles, even when they lie on the other side of a wall on the same screen.**
- **Each icon you pick up will give you one extra weapon. Make sure that your selection system is switched to the weapon you most need *before* you land on the icon. And remember, if you've already got the maximum number of shields there's no point in picking up an icon while you're in shield mode.**
- **As the game gets harder, it's always a good idea to hit the spacebar as soon as you enter a new screen. While it's paused, you can plan your strategy and get ready to select the weapon needed.**
- **On the fourth level, there are lots of round things which eject brown, spiky spheres. Although these look like those ever-so-useful multiples, they are in fact missiles. These are deadly to the touch, but can be shot to reveal jewels. A good way to increase your score, but not really worth collecting.**



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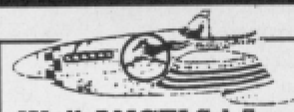
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C.U. T-SHIRT COMPO RESULTS!

Well ANGELS 1 5 and REACH FOR THE SKY! What a lot of aircraft buffs read the mag. We were so impressed with the number of correct answers to the "what plane is Amiga Angie sitting on?" compo (in the November issue) that we've decided to award not one but **THREE C.U. T-shirts.**

The winners with the first correct answers were. . . **TIM CALLOWAY, GARY STELLING** and **J. P. NEALE** — WELL DONE. For those still wondering the plane was, of course, a. . .
North American P.51 MUSTANG

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In the October issue of CU an ad appeared for 'Gordon Harwood Computers' that contained misinformation. The ad suggested that people who bought the Amiga 'Pack 1' would receive both the 'Wizball' & 'Starglider' games. These games should not have appeared in the ad and only did so as a result of a genuine mistake. In no way was it the fault of Gordon Harwood computers and we apologise for any inconvenience that may have been caused to them.

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ANGIE SAYS

"Well, the C.U. boys only make me wear this ridiculous outfit once a year. . . and everyone knows Santa's a woman!!"



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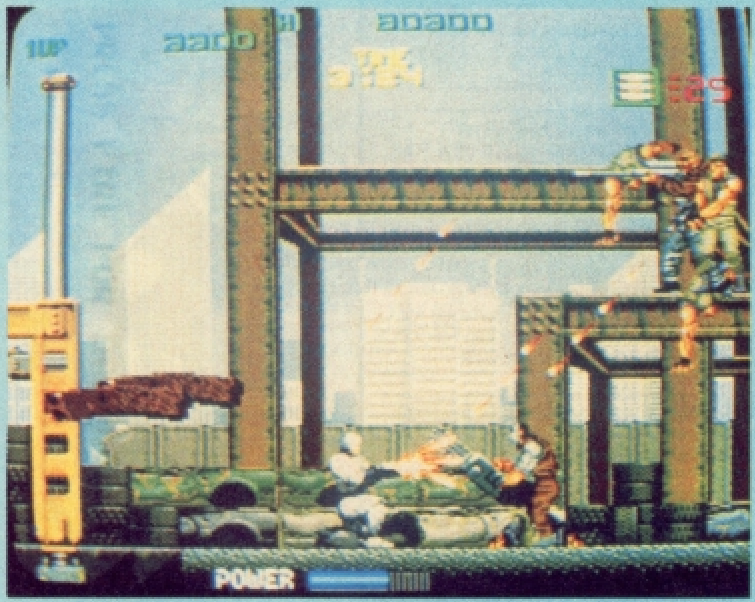
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Take on the scaffold-dwelling felons.



Fancy a scrap?



A chain saw maniac attacks.



Beware of grenade-lobbers.

ROBOCOP

The means by which *Robocop* came to appear in your local house of fun have already been outlined elsewhere, but for those in the back row who weren't paying attention, I'll repeat the story just once more.

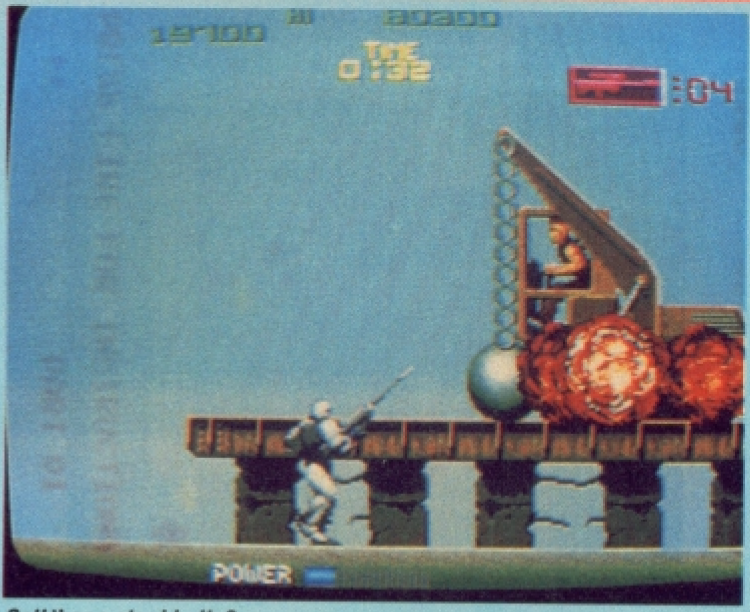
Initially Manchester's Ocean Software acquired all the rights to this very wonderful sci-fi movie, in which a terminally injured Detroit cop of the future is rebuilt in a bionic stylee to take on the powerful forces of futurecrime running rampant in the city. Then they turned the usual conversion rules on their head by giving a coin-op house — Data East — the rights to bring out an arcade game based on the film. To our knowledge *Robocop* represents the first ever example of a software house selling a licence to a coin-op house as opposed to the other way around.

But *Robocop* won't only be notable for the circumstances of its birth; it also just so happens to be a great game.

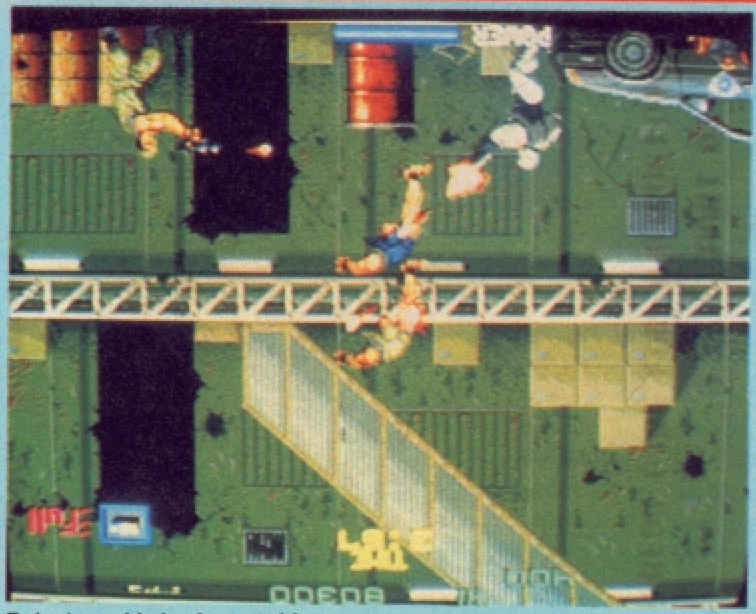
Getting the concept and feel of a film character onto a game screen is notoriously difficult. Happily, the iron-clad hero of *Robocop* is not as complicated a cinematographic character as, say, Thomas More in "A Man For All Seasons", or even The Scarecrow in "The Wizard Of Oz". No, old Robe is basically into wiping the streets clean of lawless scumbags with clinical efficiency,

ADES

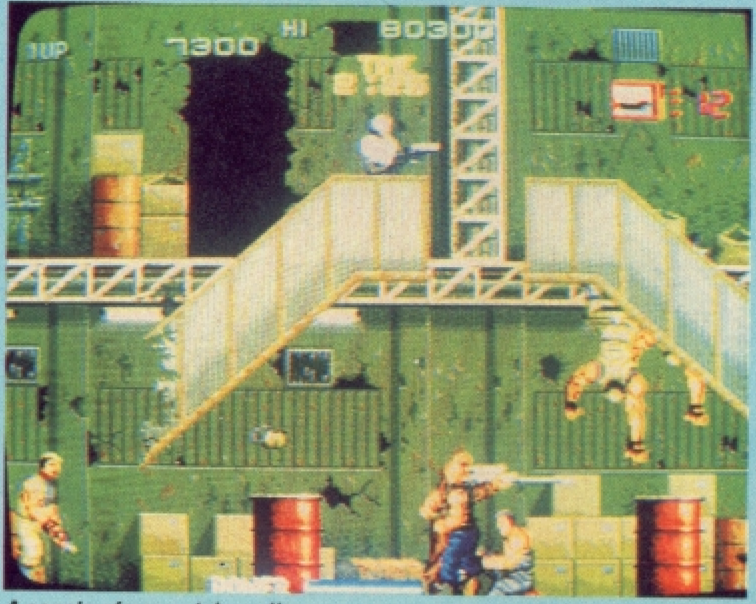
DATA EAST
3 x 10p



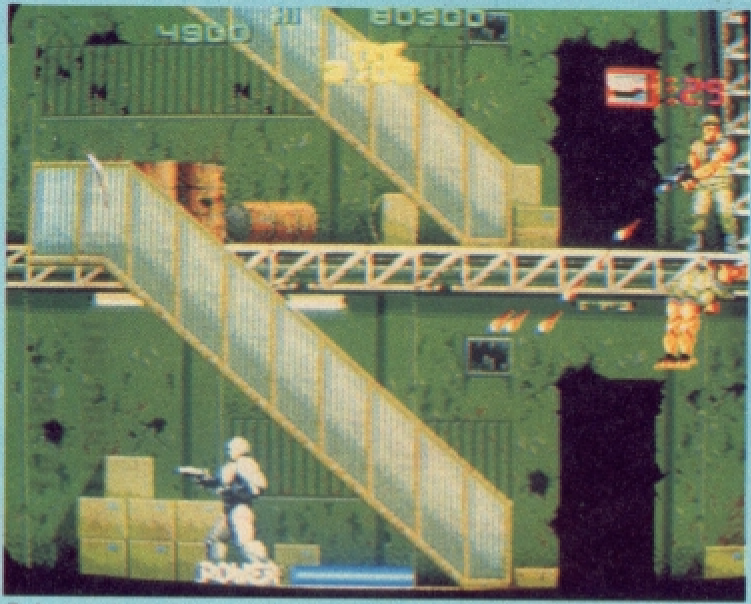
***Call** those steel balls?*



Robe turns his back on problems.



A couple of goons take a dive.



Robocop: beat dis!

and Data East have captured this particular personal quality perfectly.

Robocop starts out by dealing with his initial assailants using only his metal-gauntleted fists. Despite his seemingly indestructible appearance, Robocop does have to watch his energy level, represented at the foot of the oversize screen in bar form. If he takes enough blows (each time he receives a hit, his superhuman form flashes green) he'll crumple up and die just like any other video game star.

The large upright cabinet which houses *Robocop* numbers among its attributes a brutal sound system — each time Robe punches out an assailant, there's a resounding "Whoomppp", and the occasional snatches of digitised speech are excellent.

The bad boys start off armed only with fists, knives and, in one case, a motorcycle, but they soon realise that a little more by way of hardware is going to be needed to halt the metallic law enforcer and take to shooting and lobbing hand grenades from windows and from behind boxes at him. As soon as the shooting starts, our hero draws his own formidable hand gun, and starts dishing out some summary justice, though he has to be careful with his limited ammunition supplies.

Along the way there are extra ammunition, energy and firepower icons to be collected, which is just as well because the going gets pretty tough.

And then, of course, there are the "bosses". At the end of level one you have to engage in solo combat with a large mutant robot who walks around the screen spraying lasers at you. You'll need to be nimble to avoid this unpleasant machine and hit it sufficiently often in its sensitive head region to ensure that its energy levels hits rock bottom before yours does.

At the end of level two, you've got to face a van load of baddies. Once you've disabled the vehicle itself, out hop a motley array of nasties, including two chainsaw-wielding warriors.

Assuming he manages to get past these different perils, our hero declares, presumably to the recently-deceased criminals, in a reasonable if rather metallic voice: "Thank you for your cooperation". Wot a charmer!

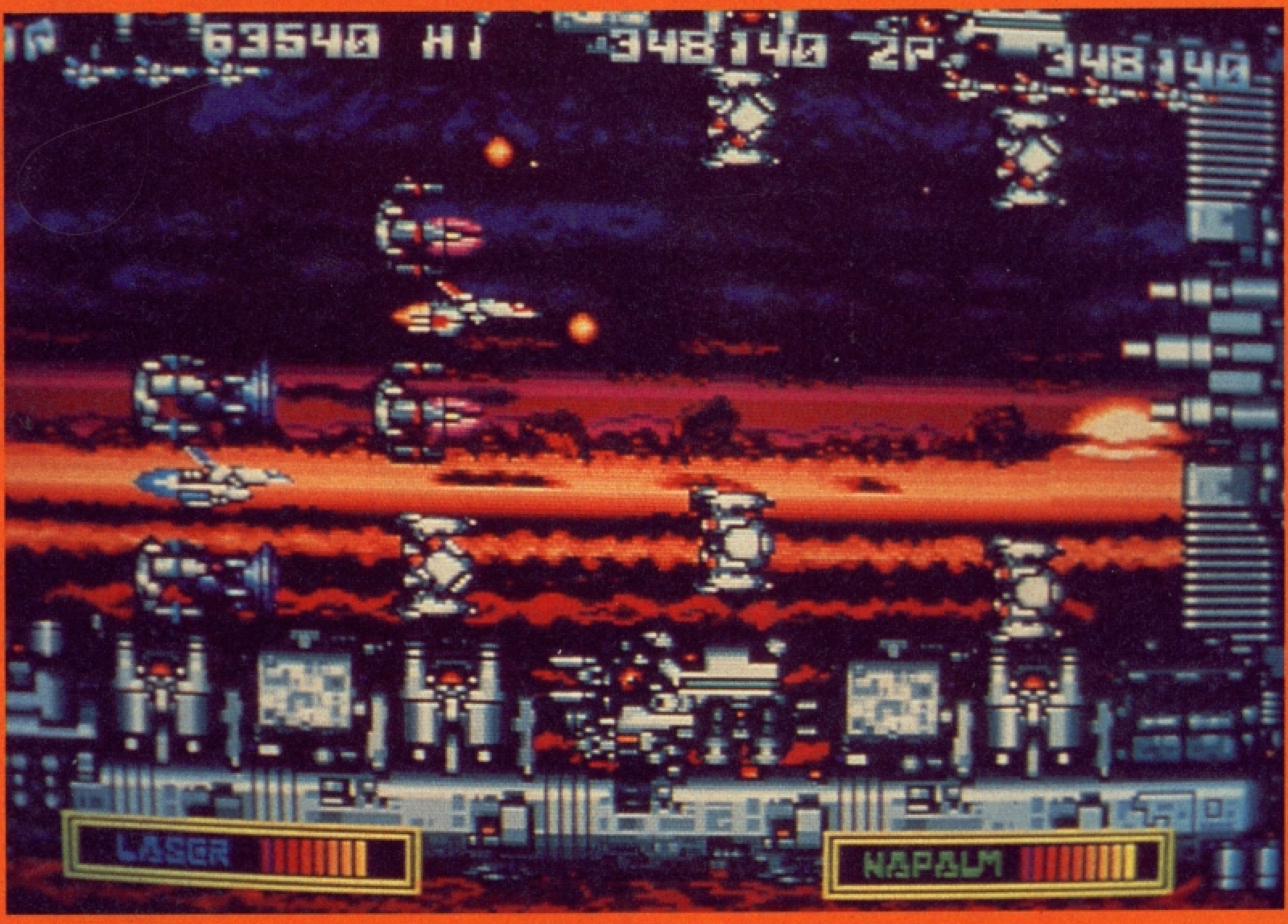
With later levels taking you into scrapyards, where you've got crushing equipment as well as felons to contend with, you also get the opportunity of picking up pump-action shot guns and the like from fallen baddies.

I could go on, but I think you're getting the picture: brilliant graphics, great sounds, excellent gameplay and some nice little comic touches into the bargain. All in all, this one's going to be massieeeeeve. . .

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS:	8
SOUND:	8
TOUGHNESS:	7
ENDURANCE:	8
CONVERTABILITY:	8
OVERALL:	8

ARCA



Two options each and going strong.

THUNDER

With the apparent, hopefully temporary, running out of steam of the big dedicated game developers, 1989 may well see a return to more traditional gameplaying habits among those who've spent most of the last year — and presumably most of their change too — being jerked around like a cork in the Atlantic.

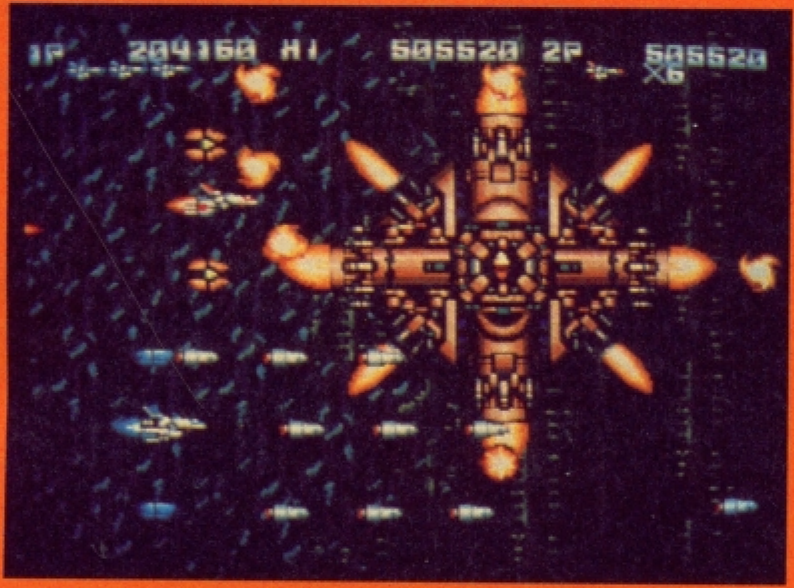
And if you happen to be one of those folk trying to get used to *standing* when you play again after a luxurious twelve months spent in dedicated cabinets, Konami's latest treatment of the old progressive shoot 'em up theme should help you kick the console habit.

For one or two players, *Thunder Cross* places you in a fairly familiar scenario; plenty of aliens, rockets and rocks scrolling horizontally in your direction for you to devastate.

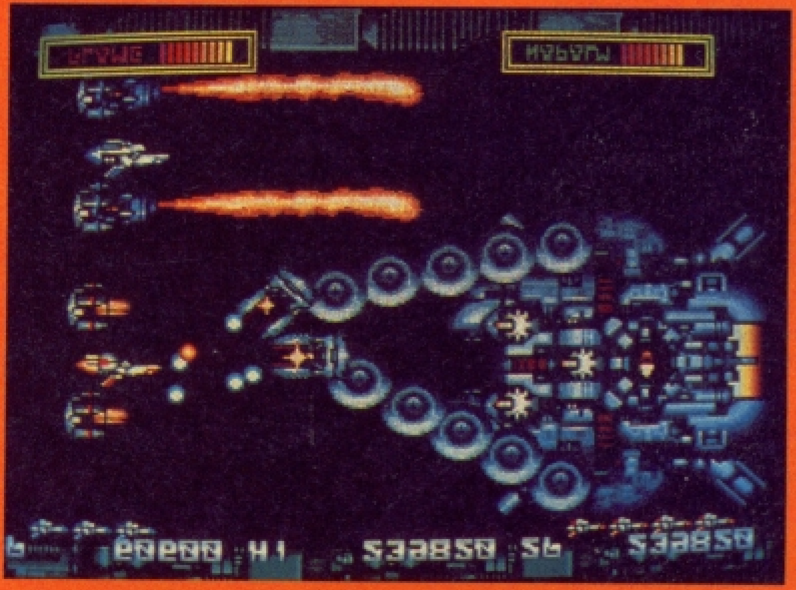
As with many progressive shoot 'em ups, the key is to kill things in groups. If you manage to wipe out an entire team of nasties, you'll find a power-up capsule left behind for you (or your companion) to pick up.

As usual, these capsules provide you with increases in speed, rate of fire, direction of fire and type of missile, depending on the letter contained inside 'em. They also occasionally provide you with one of the curiously-named *Option* pods. These are like the multiples in *Salamander* and they fly beside you, spewing out the same alien death as your main ship, and are indestructible. More unusually, you can adjust whether your accompanying pod (or pods — you can carry up to four of 'em at any one time, two on each side of your ship) travel close to or far away from your ship by using the option adjust

Arcade Star



Master the 8-way blaster.



Flame on against the claws.



Blast the lava.



A boss is macro-lasered.

CROSS

KONAMI
3 x 10p

button.

There are also three special power-ups — macro laser, nuke bomb and flame thrower — which can't be used without an option and only last for a limited amount of time, but which achieve spectacular results in the destruction of aliens stakes.

And just who are these unfortunates whom you plan to devastate? Well, there's all kinds really, and most of them spectacular. From huge metallic mushrooms and death stars, to minutemen missiles and meteorites, with plenty of smaller, but just as deadly alien fighters to contend with, you'll need every ounce of fire-power and as many options as you can acquire.

The ways in which these nasties move, operate and attack are infinitely varied and will require either clairvoyance, or a healthy financial investment, to work out.

The background graphics against which all this confrontation is fought out are even more impressive than we've come to expect from state-of-the-art, crumbling machinery and skyscrapers set against vivid-coloured skies.

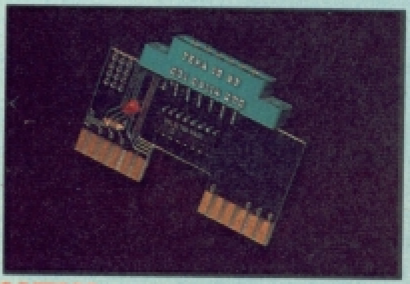
Thunder Cross really does put up the challenge to all the other shoot 'em up manufacturers. The size and movement of the enemy, the quality of the graphics, the smoothness of the gameplay, and the overall speed, variety and toughness of the action here are simply superb, as good as and better than anything I've seen in a non-dedicated shoot 'em up.

One to battle through crowds for.

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS:	9
SOUND:	8
TOUGHNESS:	9
ENDURANCE:	9
CONVERTABILITY:	7
OVERALL:	9

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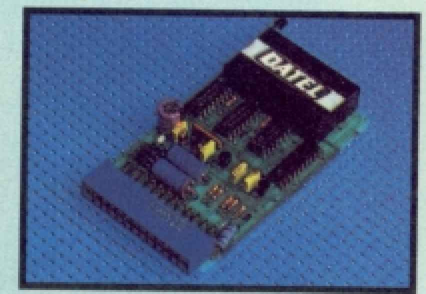
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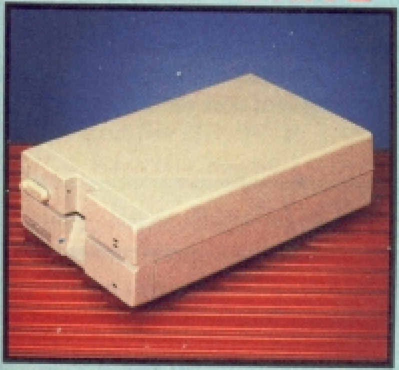
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tommy's TIPS

Faulty drive

● I purchased a Commodore 1541C from a respected computer retailer over two years ago. One year after the purchase of this item, it developed a fault which I have just found out to be irreparable. The problem relates to the control unit of the disk drive and as a result none of my software will load at all.

I have spent the last year trying to get it repaired, through highly respected computer companies, who have all told me that it cannot be repaired. I have actually found out that the root of the problem lies within the actual design. After many weeks of research I have found out that my disk drive was actually the 1541C Mk1 (of which only a few hundred were ever made) which was recalled because of the design fault (relating to my problem). The disk drives were all recalled by Commodore Business Machines for replacement. However my drive did not get back to Commodore. Therefore I purchased a disk drive which was originally faulty.

Could you please help me out as I use my computer and drive for business purposes.
Andrew Cheung,
Co. Down,
N. Ireland

You are in rather a difficult situation since your drive obviously worked correctly for the first year, which of course was the period of warranty. Had the fault occured during the warranty period and not been capable of being fixed, then you would have been entitled to a new drive. In the event, you have been extremely unlucky, but it is always possible that Commodore might look upon it as an exceptional case and at least offer you an exchange model at lower cost.

Your best bet is to approach the dealer from whom you purchased the drive originally and ask his help in returning it to Commodore, with a detailed explanation as to its origin and exactly what it is you would like Commodore to do about it (a new drive at this stage is out of the question I would think!).

I don't hold out a lot of hope, but I equally don't think you have anything to lose. From your letter, you already appear to have been without the drive for nearly a year, so a few more weeks shouldn't really make much difference. I wish you the best of luck.

Back-up

● I am soon hoping to get an Amiga A500 and would like to know how to make a back-up of the Workbench disc. Can I make a back-up with the workbench disk or do I have to pay more for a back-up utility, if so which would be the cheapest?
Paul Crook,
Osset,
W. Yorks

The Workbench has built-in disk copying facilities for all non-protected disks, and this will work quite happily with the Workbench disk as with any other. Having said that, it only uses one drive, even if you have two, which can be a pain at times. I would personally recommend getting a disk-copier, the exact type is not that critical, since most of the time you will be copying unprotected software anyway. The advantages of a copier are that they can use both drives (if you have a second one) and are normally much quicker than the Workbench utility. Try the existing one first — if that suits you then fine, until you get that second drive!

Amiga queries

● Over a year ago, I upgraded from a 64 to an Amiga 500. I am very happy with it, but I have encountered a few problems, and I would be grateful if you could answer them for me:

1. Is there any way to load in Amiga Basic with more than just 25Kb? Seeing the Amiga has a ½ meg, it's silly to only use 25Kb.

2. Will a 5¼" drive store as much information on a disk as a 3½" drive, as I am currently thinking of getting one. It would seem better to buy a 5¼" drive because disks are much cheaper.

3. Is there any way to stop my disk-drive (internal) from making so much noise?

4. Is there an easy way to write a scrolling message in Amiga Basic?

5. Can you recommend any books that explain Amiga Basic clearly in easy-to-follow steps?
Bruce Wood,
Harworth,
Nr. Doncaster,
S. Yorkshire

One of the problems with a machine like the Amiga, it differs quite markedly from the sort of computer most people have got used to such as the 64. In the latter machine, the majority of the available memory was usable via BASIC, yet this often meant that out of 64k of total memory, you might get only 38k available for the BASIC program, sprite storage and data. With the Amiga, you do not have just a single area of memory, but a dynamic memory management system which allows it to actually run several programs apparently simultaneously. The result is that BASIC is artificially constrained to work within a limited area so that several BASIC programs can be run together if necessary without interfering with each other. Probably the best book for taking BASIC in easy stages is Elementary Amiga Basic by Compute!, which costs £12.95 and is obtainable from Computer Manuals Ltd (021-706 6000).

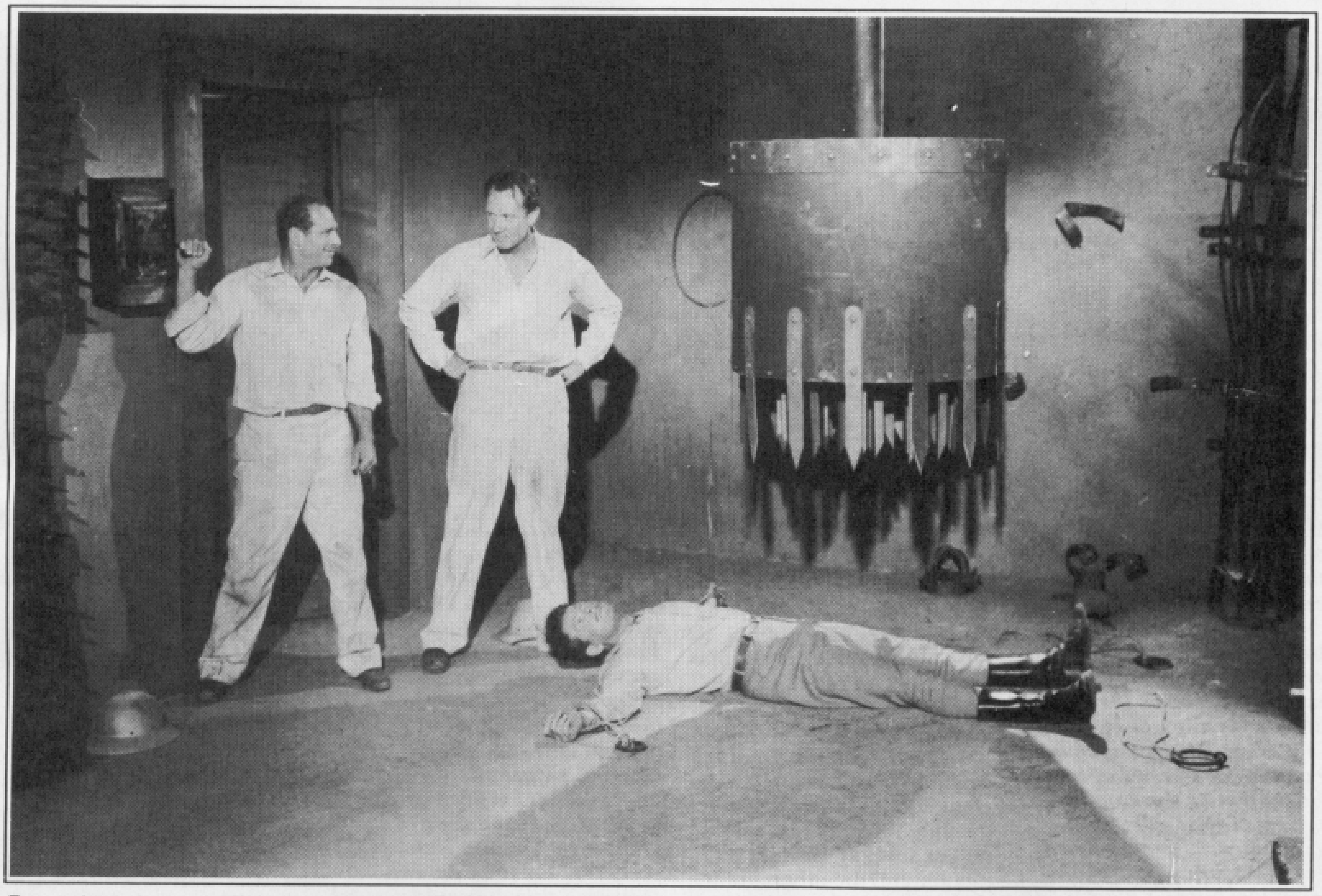
As for the argument between 5.25" and 3.5" disks, the former are only really intended to give compatibility with MS-DOS software when the Amiga is fitted with an IBM Bridgeboard (A2000) or Sidecar (A1000). It only stores 360k bytes per disk, whereas the 3.5" stores approx 800k bytes per disk. Even if you could use a 5.25" drive directly with an A500, there is no Amiga software in this format, so it would be of limited use as a second drive anyway.

If your drive is so noisy as to be a nuisance then it probably wouldn't load properly either. A certain amount of noise is unavoidable as the head motor moves the head assembly across the disk.

Database wall

● For several months now I have been working on a database program for my Amiga, but just recently I have run into a brick wall.

The problem is that I can't seem to load the file from the disk into the memory. The main program uses sequential files (to make it easier for me!) with the main one called 'Bookfile'. The records in the file have 18 fields, all of which are LINE



Tommy demonstrates the 64's anti-burglar device . . .

INPUT's. Each of the data for the fields is called LASTDATA (1-18). I can enter and save each record with no problem, but when it comes to loading them in again — trouble...

Since I am not exactly a Jez San I would very much appreciate some help or advice.

David McKergan,
Port Stewart,
Northern Ireland

Without having the program listing to see exactly what you are doing it is difficult to be precise. However, if you check the following points it may help you spot your own mistake.

1. When you open the file for entering the data and saving it, it is obviously opened for OUTPUT.

2. In order to read it the second time for OUTPUT then you automatically destroy the contents of the file.

3. If you open it the second time for OUTPUT then you automatically destroy the contents of the file.

4. In order to add new records to the file, you must open it in APPEND mode (OPEN "A" etc), otherwise you get the effect of 3 above.

One final point, if you are opening and closing the file correctly, you may not be 'de-limiting' the data elements properly. Ensure that you are using commas between the data items, rather than semi-colons. Also check that you are reading in the data items in the same order that they were stored. It may seem obvious, but I have seen programmers try to read the data in the reverse order to that in which it was stored, on the principle of last in, first out.

With any luck the scream of 'Eureka!' will have been heard somewhere during this answer, as the solution leaps out and pins you to the computer table!

Plantpot

● I am a Portuguese reader in need of help.

I've bought a C64 from from an American and, as you know, the European T.V. system (PAL) is different from NTSC (the American one). How can I connect my C64 to a T.V. set?

Will I have to buy a television with an R.G.B. socket? If so, what cable will I connect to it? The RF output or the monitor one?

If I want to connect my 64 to a PAL T.V. set, by inserting a PAL modulator, or changing something inside the C64, would it be expensive?

Luís Daniel Vale,
Almada
Portugal

You have two problems I am afraid. The first is that you cannot get RGB out of a C64. The second is that, even though it might be possible to change the internal modulator, the clock speed on the computer is also slightly different and this can cause further problems. Even a CBM monitor attached to the monitor socket might still suffer from problems with the different sync rates.

I have heard of the modulator being changed, so it is not impossible, but only if you can get it done by a Commodore dealer (unlikely in the circumstances) or by a radio/TV engineer. I have no idea what it would cost, especially in Portugal, but don't expect it to be cheap. The moral is: never buy a computer with the 'wrong' TV output — it just isn't worth the hassle, however cheap it might be.

Alarmed

● The other day I suggested to my children that we should use our Commodore 64 as a burglar alarm control system. But I have had trouble finding a program to help me and was wondering if you could guide me in the right direction to find one, or failing that, perhaps you could print a listing that I could use (preferably with simple wiring diagrams). Using this listing would I be able to add other systems alongside the alarm (traditional bell type) such as smoke alarms.

P. D. Corbin,
Hull,
N. Humberside

Back in the days when the C64 reigned supreme and all manner of gizmos, gadgets and bolt-on goodies for it appeared almost daily, a company called Micro Security produced a burglar alarm system called The Sentinel. It connected up to the 64 and had 2 input channels and 6 output channels, and there was a complete pack available with all the window sensors, wire and even the alarm bell. In addition to being used as an alarm system, the software could control other devices (such as a lamp) on a time basis. I actually reviewed the device, back in Jan 85, when it cost £99 for the complete pack. You could just try

tommy's TIPS

Micro Security on 0705 486738 on the offchance, but that was a long time ago in computer terms!

A more modern system, but much more expensive, is called RED BOXES. This appeared around the end of 1986 so is more likely to be still available. This system consists of a series of red boxes (hence the name) which can act as electrical control units for lamps etc, while the infra-red module acts as a burglar alarm. The whole system is controlled by a box called 'Red Leader' which contains its own computer. It is this computer box that you can program, using your 64. The big advantage of this system over any other is that having programmed the box you can disconnect the 64 and carry on using it! RED BOXES works through the mains wiring system, which also means that you don't have to get involved with re-wiring the house to connect up all the sensors etc. At £133 for three boxes (incl. Red Leader) it could end up as quite an expensive system. It can, however, be programmed using Red BASIC (similar to CBM BASIC) so you could do lots of fancy things with it. Contact is Electronic Fulfilment Services Ltd, tel: 0223 323143.

Finally, if you want to do it yourself then you might keep an eye out for a VICREL module. This is a control device which plugs into the User-port and comes with the necessary instructions to turn the switch contacts on or off. There are two input channels and six output channels. It was made by HANDIC, but again I have a feeling you may have difficulty finding one. Anyway, good luck with the searching.

Printer power

● I've had a Commodore 64 for two years now and recently bought a 1541-II disk drive and had hours of fun with it, but I have two questions for you:

1. I was thinking of getting a printer, could you tell me what is the best printer to get for the 64, what is the difference between one printer and the other, and when I get a printer do I need anything else to go with it?

2. When I leave out some characters in a program's line and move the cursor back to fix it up, after I press SHIFT and INST/DEL together to get the desired space for the missing letters it works fine, until I use another key (not numbers or letters) such as CLR/HOME or INST/DEL, instead of doing what they're supposed to, a letter comes up with a light blue square around it. This keeps happening until I press it long enough, but by then the program's line is wrecked.

Also, once I press SHIFT/INST/DEL I can't get the signs above the numbers until I press it for a long time.

Antoni Centofanti,
Melbourne,
Australia

Up until recently I would probably have recommended a CBM printer as being the best option for the CBM 64, but with the advent of the STAR LC-10 printer with a Commodore interface I really do think that this has to be one of the best value printers around. If you specify the CBM version then you do not need any extra interfaces and you get all the normal Commodore graphics etc. The one disadvantage of getting the CBM version is that you cannot easily connect it to any other computer if you change machines later on. The alternative is to get the standard Centronics parallel version of the STAR, plus one of the many graphics interface units that are available. These interfaces convert the peculiar CBM control codes and characters into the more standard commands that a centronics printer expects. However, this does add about £40–£70 to the overall price, depending on the interface.

Whatever system you go for, ensure that you order a cable at the same time; some printers include a cable and some don't so check with the supplier.

Your second query is not a problem, but a feature of the Commodore BASIC Editor. If you are inside inverted commas (") then the INST key actually allows you to insert control characters into a string (e.g. pressing CTRL and 2 would change the colour of the following characters to WHITE) and what appears is the graphic representation of the control character. You can do all sorts of fancy tricks with this like including DEL characters in a string (this allows you to delete program lines from a listing for example). All control characters such as cursor movements, etc. can be included by this method, but if all you want to do is add some spaces then you must follow the INST key presses by the required number of SPACE BAR presses and NOT the cursor right key. Outside inverted commas the INST key works as normal (but be careful that you don't press the " key or the Editor will assume you have started another string).

Dumbo

● I have a BBC disk drive and would like to know if it would work with my C64 and if so where would I be able to get any spare parts that are needed.

B. Carrie,
Dundee,
Scotland

I regret to say that there is absolutely no way you can use a BBC disk drive with a CBM 64. The CBM disk drives (and all compatible units) have the Disk Operating System (DOS) built-in to the drive electronics in a ROM. Since the BBC drives are so-called 'dumb' drives which use a DOS resident in the host computer, the two types are not compatible. I'm afraid it's a case of having to fork out for a CBM disk drive if you want that facility.

Plus points

● I am thinking of buying an Excelerater+ disk drive but I'd like to check a few things first.

1. Does the company 'Eveshams Micros' exist?
2. Do the GEOS (geoPaint, geoWrite and WYSIWYG) come complete with the disk drive?
3. Will I have any problems with the Virus?
4. What are your recommendations on the drive?
5. What inch disk does the drive take

Thanks for any advice
Richard Orton,
Stoke-on-Trent

Evesham Micros certainly do exist and advertise in just about every Commodore magazine there is. GEOS is supplied with every drive and includes geoPAINT and geoWRITE (WYSIWYG describes the type of word-processor — What You See Is What You Get) plus a Desk Accessories program. The type of drive has no bearing on any virus program and if you only use commercial programs on disk you won't suffer from it anyway. I think the Excelerator+ is good value for money at £129-95, and it takes the standard 5.25" disks (170 kbyte capacity).

CU

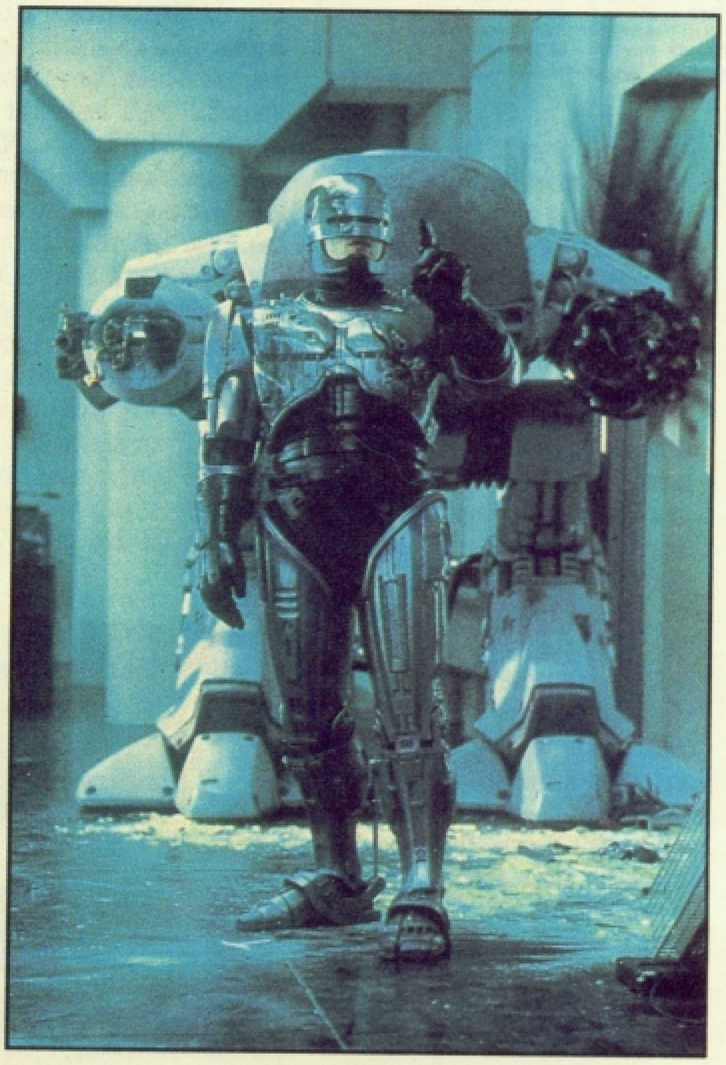


DRAGON NINJA!

We have the first review on the Amiga and the 64 of Ocean's conversion of Data East's smash hit coin-op and we're offering you the chance to win the arcade machine!

MORE FREEBIES!

We're giving away a giant (A2) size poster with the mag of that steel law enforcer Robocop.



PLUS

Reviews of *R-Type, SDI, Thunderblade, Robocop, Double Dragon,* the definitive *Ninja II* map (delayed this month, sorry), *Star Trek* tips, a chance to vote for the best games of '88 in our annual survey, and the opportunity to test your software knowledge against the CU Crew in their trivia quiz.

And there'll be news of a special CU giveaway in February and our new look cover. Whatever you do don't miss January's bumper edition.

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Thank you for your co-operation . . .

NEXT MONTH

Cliff declares war!

Rambo games for gospel king

WHEN Cliff Richard comes off stage at Manchester's Apollo Theatre, exhausted from spreading the message of peace and love, he goes on the attack — Rambo style.

By Ian Marrow

Knives, guns, grenades — anything goes as Cliff blows away the enemy.

For angelic Cliff is a secret video game freak, and the latest game put specially into his dressing room by management at the Apollo is called Guerilla Wars.

It is described as a "Shoot 'em Down" type of war game by Stockport-based suppliers Hazel Grove Music.

"You are a soldier and have various means to destroy tanks, planes and enemy personnel using guns, knives and hand grenades", said the company's liaison manager, Steve Dinsley.

"Possibly it calms his nerves before a show. I hope he is still playing it — we certainly haven't had any complaints so far."

Apollo manager Mr Paul Latham was reluctant to discuss the star's love of video games, but confirmed one had been supplied for Cliff's dressing room: "He just likes playing video games and we are happy to indulge him," he said.

A spokeswoman for Mr Richard's agents, Savile Artists, said: "I don't think video games are a consuming passion with him — just an interest.

"I know that he has one at his own home in Surrey, but it's certainly not something he always has in his dressing room at shows."



Rambo rocker . . . Cliff plays out private war games — on the video

So now we know what Cliff gets up to in his spare time. He plays shoot 'em downs (!!?!?)

THE LAST WORD

And so we come to the bit you can read on the toilet. What better recommendation can you think of than that. That ranks us alongside the back page of the Mirror, the letters page of the NME, and Private Eye's Coleman Balls. Here then, have another bite from the rotten core of the software apple.

● Our favourite story this month concerns the problems of the long distance phone call. You might wonder why the 3D racing sim *Continental Circus* is so called — after all there's no circus in it, and somehow it doesn't fit the game at all. That's because someone in this country misheard the name and plastered it all over the cabinets. It should, of course, be known as *Continental Circuit*.

● Not all renamings occur through accident. Take *Battle Island*, reviewed in CU last month. Bohdan Buciak pointed out then how it reminded him of the old Elite classic *Commando*. That's because it was written by Elite as a follow up to the Capcom release, entitled *Commando '88*. That idea came to an abrupt halt when the licence passed to US Gold.

● Meanwhile it seems US Gold have themselves been doing a subtle bit of renaming. You'll remember the recent released *Pepsi Mad Mix Challenge* which was received unfavourably by many mags. The reason for this could be that it was released earlier this year in Spain as Mad Mix by a company called Toposoft . . .

● There is a scurillous rumour going around about Telecomsoft at the moment and we're going to quosh it! Splurrtt! There, slimed it! It is being suggested in some cruel circles that BT's software wing has fallen under control of the iron girdle. Wimmin they're saying, have taken over. Male employees including Sean 'Beefy' Brennan have been leaving in droves and it's suggested that a feminist powerbase has been installed under dominatrix Paula Byrne. This move has fuelled further rumours of another takeover bid, this time from feminist publishing house Virago. There's absolutely no truth that Rainbird are planning to change the colour of their packaging to green, or that they're planning to release 'The Female Eunuch' as an arcade adventure.

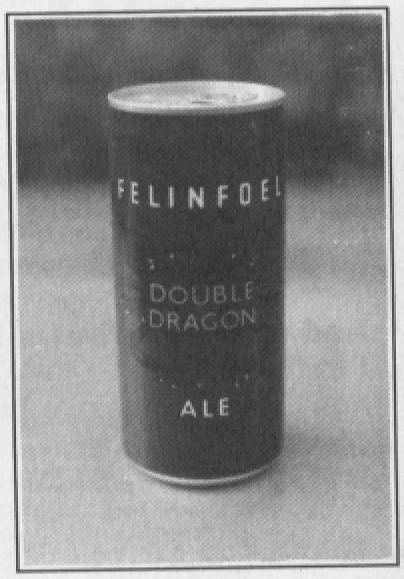
● It's all change again at CU as roving Dep Ed Steve Jarratt has decided to rove some more in search of fame, and fortune. He won't find it at ACE which is where he's going though . . .

● Good news for gamers, Stavros Fasoulas is out of the army! Bad news is though, that he's going to write a book. It seems the now cropheaded programmer has returned from the frozen border with Russia, where he's spent the last six months patrolling on a bike, obsessed by the idea of bodybuilding . . .

● Word has it of two new titles that won't be appearing this year. One is Ocean's *Victory Road*, which, after a second attempt to produce a playable game, has been cancelled. The 64 version of *Soldier of Light*, too looks like it will never see the light of day. The programmers were given a penalty schedule to work on by Softek that was so unrealistic that they now owe the company . . .

● Watch out next month for The Last Word trivia quiz — a brainbusting test of your software knowledge. Until then . . .

Now that's our kind of freebie. Mastertronic came bearing gifts to promote the conversion of Double Dragon. A pint of Wales' finest brew. Author, author!





THE ARCADE COMPILATION OF THE YEAR

TAITO®

COIN-OP Hits





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RASTAN The Warrior King. Lands that produce men of legend, dragon slayers, lie in his shadow – guardians of evil fear his fire spewing sword, the axe he wields as swift as lightning. State of the art programming makes a true simulation of the Arcade for your home micro, enjoy superb graphics and realistic action as RASTAN takes on a world of dangers – magical wizards, fire breathing lions, bats, snakes, skeletons and finally the living dead. Is it more than you can handle?

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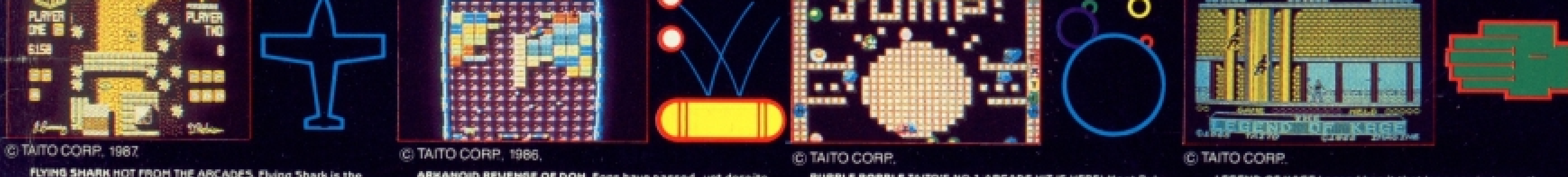
SLAP FIGHT You are the pilot of the Slapfighter and must destroy the evil alien swarms which confront you, wave after deadly wave on the ever hostile planet of Orac. To aid you in your challenge collect icons and substantially increase your fire power and speed. Superb graphics and split second timing give this game an addictive edge.

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RENEGADE REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE? In the knife-edge world of the vigilante there is no place to rest, no time to think – but look sharp – there is always time to die! From the city subways to the gangland ghettos you will always encounter the disciples of evil who's mission it is to exterminate the only man on earth who dares to throw down the gauntlet on their path – the Renegade. PLAY RENEGADE...PLAY MEAN!

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ARKANOID The era and time of this story is unkown. After the mothership "Arkanoid" was destroyed, a spacecraft "Vaus" scrambled away, only to be trapped in the void... You control the Vaus and have to penetrate 32 levels and then confront the "Dimension Changer" whom you must destroy in order to reverse time and ressurect the "Arkanoid." Frantic action and split second timing combine to produce the most addictive and compulsive game.



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FLYING SHARK HOT FROM THE ARCADES. Flying Shark is the definitive conversion of this shoot-em-up, chart-topping classic hit from Taito. Develop your strategy as you face swarms of enemy planes, tanks, gun emplacements and a host of sea-borne craft as you bomb, blast and battle your way into arcade history.

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ARKANOID REVENGE OF DOH. Eons have passed...yet despite apparent annihilation in the original ARKANOID game, Dimension-controlling force "DOH" has come back to life, and occupying the huge space-craft ZARG, has entered our Universe. ARKANOID type space-fighter MIXTEC runs through long forgotten computer data until it finds the answer to his threat..."VAUS 2" is launched and speeds towards the threatening alien presence, before it can extract its revenge..."The Revenge of Doh"

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BUBBLE BOBBLE TAITO'S NO 1 ARCADE HIT IS HERE! Meet Bub and Bob, two of the busiest beasties you ever saw, as they battle their way across 100 levels of controlled chaos in search of their girlfriends (ahhh!). Jump around picking up goodies and secret weapons as you seek to outsmart your enemies, but beware...hang around too long and you'll face Baron von Blubba, from whom there's no escape!

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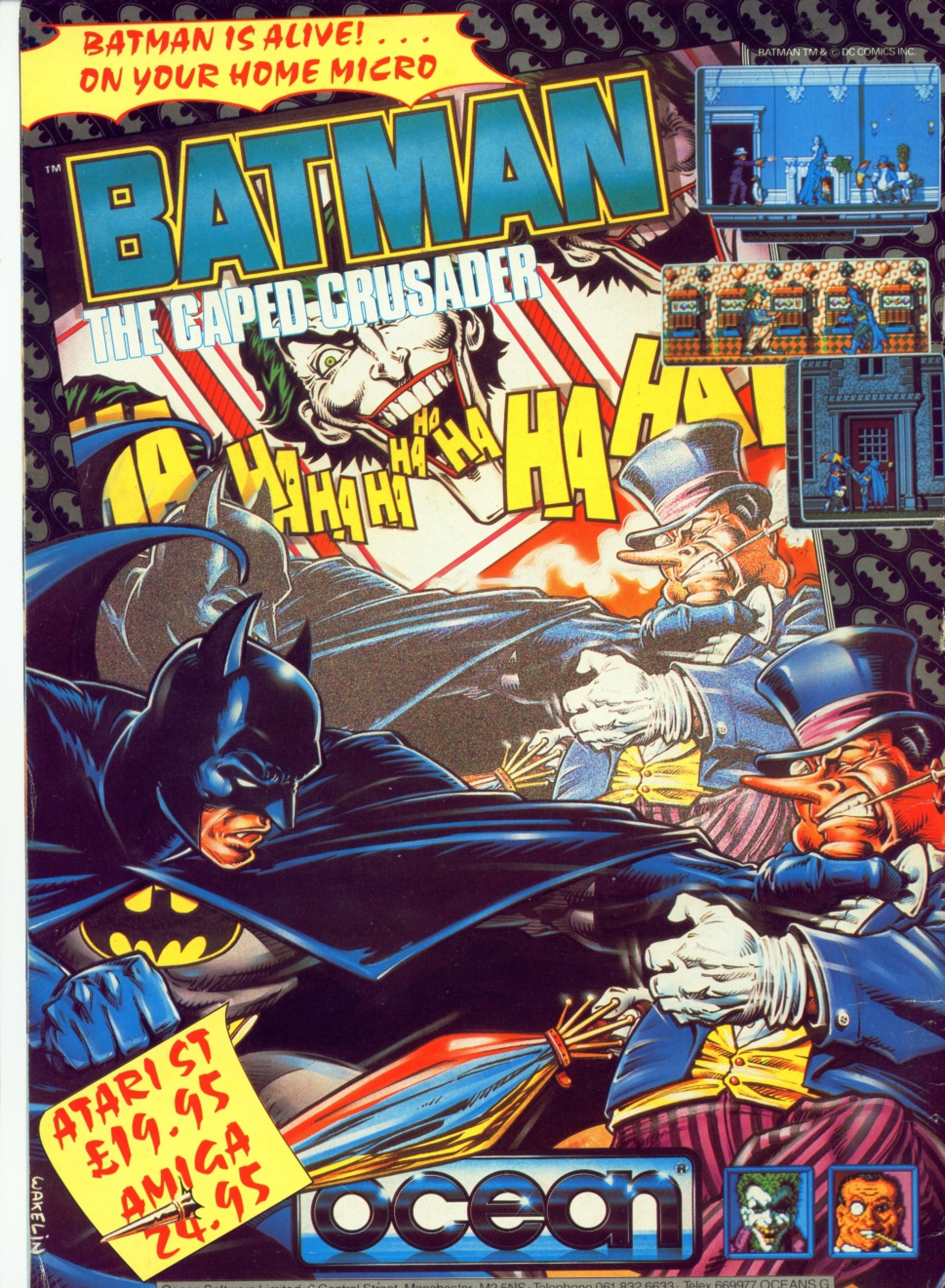
LEGEND OF KAGE Legend has it that long ago in Japan the beautiful Princess Kiri was hidnapped by the evil Dragon King, and Kage, a young ninja who was walking with her in the forest at the time, was given the formidable task of rescuing her. You must help Kage in his quest through the forest to the Dragon King's palace, gain entrance, find Kiri and take her to safety, while avoiding the Dragon King's ninja guards.

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